These rules of inheritance are followed very closely in practice, because everyone knows that any dispute over inheritance that cannot be settled amicably between the surviving relatives goes to court—and the court normally takes ten percent of the estate for its adjudication services in an inheritance dispute. When a man is called into the courts, and most Kanuri have been to court at some time in their lives, he must go with his agnates—his father, paternal grandfather, father's brothers, sons, father's brother's sons, and any other male he can muster who is related to him in the male line. This agnatically related group is legally responsible as a whole for the acts of each of its members unless a crime against the state has been committed. A Kanuri who is threatened immediately thinks of this group as the one that he can turn to for help. As we shall see later the group often lives close together so that the agnates are neighbors as well as a corporate group in the eyes of the law. They help one another in many day-to-day activities, perform ceremonies together, and often practice the same or closely related occupations.

Although there is an emphasis on a person's agnates, his kin relations through his mother are also quite important. People who have no matrilateral kin (those related to a person through the mother), or very few of them, are considered to be unfortunate because they lack that much warmth and affection in their lives. These kin, say the Kanuri, love you like a mother loves her child. You can feel at home with them in a way that is less conflict-ridden than any other kinship relation. People often said that if they had to borrow money it was better to go to mother's kin first before asking anyone related to them agnatically. There is always some tension over property among an agnatic descent group because it is the major one for purposes of inheritance, family wealth, and privileges. People say that if a man borrows from his father or his father's brothers, or his brothers, or his patrilateral cousin, he is trying to get his inheritance or that of his brothers before the proper time. Furthermore, the responsibility in court, and in the eyes of public opinion, of one agnate for another also increases the tensions in this group as compared to the matrilateral one. By contrast, however, a man with no agnates is not just unfortunate—he is a social outcast. He has no group to stand up for him as a result of his birth into society; he has no legal right to a father's inheritance, he is thought of as an outcast, he must rely solely on his wits, and he cannot easily be trusted.

A village area chief and his advisers declared that I should not hire a certain man and claimed that they were going to see to it that I certainly did not take him into my household. They told me that no one in the vicinity knew his brothers or his father, or his father's brothers, or indeed if he had any, or where they might be, and he would not volunteer any information on the subject. In their eyes he was not a responsible person, and if he did anything wrong there was no group they could call into account for it. Unless he could attach himself to a household, he simply had no means of achieving an accepted position in the community, and the village leaders did not like the idea of making me, a European stranger, responsible for this unknown man.[1] Obviously under such circumstances illegitimate

[1] This would mean that as his household head I must appear in court if and when he did something wrong. The local leaders did not believe they could require this responsibility from me, and were thus faced with the problem of allowing into their community a man for whom no one could vouch, yet giving him a paid place in one of its wealthiest households.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

price at this time of year for nearly everything, including weddings and bride-wealth, goes up.

When all the exchanges are completed everyone participating in a wedding gets some present of money, food, and clothing. The *luwali*, especially at first marriages, gets the bulk of the bridewealth and distributes the rest to the girl's family both on her mother's and her father's side. After the first marriage the girl tends to keep more and more of the bridewealth for herself, giving the *luwali* what amounts to a fee for serving as the official bride-giver. It is also important to note that when there are disputes between a husband and wife, the first person to whom both turn for arbitration is the *luwali*.

The Kanuri think of getting married in several ways. First of all they divide all marriages into first marriages (to take a girl or a small girl), and secondary marriages with a divorced woman (to take a woman or to take a divorced woman). First marriages take place for a girl around the time of puberty, while boys do not marry until they are in their late teens or early twenties, and young men of twenty-eight and twenty-nine who have not yet been married are not hard to find.

An interesting sidelight on marriage with previously unmarried young girls is the ambivalence men feel about it. Men obtain much prestige from such a marriage. But its cost invariably puts a man into great debt, and consummation of the marriage itself, traditionally, is a semi-public affair in which old women related to the girl sit outside the marriage hut and whisper to their newly-wed relative that she must resist the advances of her husband. They do this until very late at night or until they are given some proof of the girl's virginity by the husband. They then make a fearful clatter in the town or village to announce the premarital chastity of their young relative. Standards of personal appearance and sexual attraction are important to Kanuri men and center on more sexually mature women. Such standards deal with hair style, facial symmetry, type of walk, and other physical attributes and skills, as well as ability at wifely chores. None of these attributes are in any degree well-developed among young girls, so that the man must control himself and almost publicly proclaim his manhood and sexual prowess with a young girl who is not defined as sexually exciting by the culture. This causes much anxiety and I have seen men praying almost continually for several weeks in order to gain the strength to carry out a virgin's consummation. It is important to note that when some western educated Kanuri talk about marriage they immediately fasten on this semi-public consummation of the girl's first marriage as a custom that will be dropped in the future, and certainly one they do not intend to carry out or even allow in their lives. From the girl's point of view, as education in western-style schools becomes more common and the length of time in school increases, then the time of first marriage for the girls will move ahead. At present however there are only a handful of Kanuri girls who attend schools beyond the age of traditional marriage.

But what is the basis for the conflict? Why are men willing to suffer to gain such an unattractive wife? Men always explain it in the same way. A young girl has never been touched sexually by other men; he is the first; he can train her as he likes, and teach her to be a proper wife to suit his own personal wishes. Besides, it is a good Muslim custom, they always add, as they do about almost every custom when they are asked. In this case they are correct, for such young marriages are very

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

585 577 829 [571] 562 577 581 829 widespread throughout the Islamic world. However there is more to it than that—indeed it comes close to the heart of the Kanuri way of looking at things. Kanuri social life is a constant search for fruitful social contacts in which one man is the superior and the other a subordinate to him. Between the sexes, the culture defines women as inferior in rank to men. Thus the place universally available to all men for the achievement of subordinates is the family and the household, and the ideal female subordinate is a young girl, one who has not yet been divorced, that is rejected her subordination to her husband, and one whom the husband can train to become properly obedient to his own personal wishes. Thus marriage to a previously unmarried girl symbolizes what every man wants, not sexually, but socially; unblemished and complete obedience from docile subordinates who receive material benefits in return for subordination. Seen in this light the marriage with young girls [183] then becomes more understandable for it represents some of the most profoundly important values in the society.

587 Most Kanuri do not, however, marry girls who have never been married before. Generally they marry a *zower*—or divorced woman. This is carried out with much less ceremony than the virgin marriage. Men may see a divorced woman they like and simply send a friend who asks if she would like to marry. Or the men may begin an affair with her, give her market money once a week just as he would a wife, and then during this time decide whether or not he and this woman should [837] proceed towards a marriage. Such liaisons are considered formally to be illegal extramarital relations, but in everyday life they are tolerated as a form of courtship. Harsh approbation is directed toward sexual relations by a man with another man's wife. Thus although a very few men claim to remain chaste in their relations with a divorced woman, most men agree that there is nothing seriously the matter with a discreet affair with such a person.

593 562 As Muslims the Kanuri also think of marriage as a relationship involving more or less *purdah*, or wifely confinement within the household. Generally, it is made quite clear before the marriage begins just how much constraint the husband expects. And for the most part such restrictions are positively related to the class [554] and status of the husband. Thus the higher the status of the husband, the greater the probability of almost total confinement on the part of the wife. Certainly all Kanuri men would like their wives to remain inside the compound, however very few can afford to insist. To do so necessitates that there must be a well inside the compound, enough wealth so that the husband does not require the wife's work in the fields, and enough help so that he can send a male servant or client along with her on the few occasions when it becomes absolutely necessary for her to go out.

582 The Kanuri themselves categorize a few other forms of marriage on the basis of the relations already existing between the partners, or being set up by the marriage. They speak of cousin marriage, marriage with a religious practitioner, marriage with a wealthy or powerful person (a marriage of pleasure) as varieties 587 of unions. They also mention the possibility of the sororate (marriage with a person called sister by one's dead wife) and the levirate (marriage by the younger brother of his dead brother's wife or wives). These latter are quite rare, and I have only recorded one case of the levirate in the last ten years, and none of the sororate. 595 Kanuri think marriage with wife's sister, or person she calls sister while she is still

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

593 wives and thus lead to frequent divorce. In such circumstances a close intimate relationship between husband and wife is a victory of personality over social and cultural conditions in the society.

Other Family Relations and the Behavior Norms

593 602 571 829 867 To the Kanuri themselves, family relations—those between parents and children, between siblings, uncles and nephews, grandparents and grandchild, between one in-law and another and so on—are part of a larger framework of behavior governing almost all the important relations between persons and groups in the society. The Kanuri believe that these relations originate in the family where the person first learns them and are then extended outwards to include all of the important social relations of adult life. From the anthropologist's point of view it is impossible to say which comes first. Do the family relations create or cause those social relations which best suit them, or does the society outside the family create the kind of family relations required by the society at large? Whatever the answer, the Kanuri are quite clear on this point. They believe that the rules governing social relations in the family and household are the essential guides to the successful operation of the larger scaled organizations in the economic and political life of their society. Thus many social relations in Bornu have a kin-like quality or are spoken of using the idiom of kinship, even though the persons involved clearly recognize that they have no kinship with one another through genealogical, descent group, or affinal relations.

593 577 579 The most important of these relations is the *bərzum* or discipline-respect relationship closely modelled on, and usually spoken of in terms of, the father-son relationship. In this relationship a father gives his son protection, security, food and shelter, a place or status in the community, an occupation, helps him to arrange a marriage, and represents him in the adjudication of disputes. In his turn the son must be completely loyal, obedient and subserviant to his father, and work for him in whatever way the father feels is necessary. This respect is so demanding a mode of behavior in families that young children are sometimes sent away to a relative's household, usually to a grandparent, and return as one infomant put it, "when they understand respect." When the father dies, an older brother or a paternal uncle may take the place of the father as head of the household. He then receives the same respect from the dead man's children. This is so because they are older men with authority in the household. Thus all senior relatives, older siblings, and paternal uncles receive respect, and although it may not have the intense quality of the father-son relationship to begin with, everybody knows they may have to treat such a person as if he were a father under certain circumstances. Besides this, a young child is taught that in general older people are to be respected, no matter what their sex or degree of relationship to oneself. Other persons in society are indicated as being "like your father" or "greater than your father" in the amount of discipline and respect that they require. Religious specialists, political leaders, and any compound head with whom a person is staying are all in this category. In other words, the father-son behavior norm is the model used by the people themselves to describe the nature of all authority relations in the society.

[861] [602] [867] [561]

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

very often is, by divorce or death, or the movement of its members to a new place. While such changes occur, the household remains; its personnel may change, its landholdings may expand or contract, and its relations with other households through its household head may shift—but people see it as an organization in terms of which settlements are built into larger units; into wards, hamlets, villages, cities, and finally, the state itself.

The personnel of a household is based on that of the family, and generally moves through a cycle that may involve several alternatives to the usual pattern. Let us start with a couple. A young man marries for the first time, and in about sixty percent of the peasant cases recorded for three rural villages in Bornu, he brings his wife to the vicinity of his father's compound or moves into a section of his father's compound. If the latter is the case, he will move to his own compound close by after his own conjugal family (his wife or wives and children) increases in size either through the birth of children or the acquisition of more wives. When his own children grow up, his daughters leave to marry and return from time to time because of divorces or separation from their current spouses. Because many sons bring their wives to their father's household or close by, the original father finds himself the nominal head of a growing patrilocal extended family which, as we shall see in Chapter 6, can in time become a separate ward or sub-ward of the town. When the father dies, the oldest son or the most capable or successful of all sons takes over the compound of the dead father. Lands and goods are apportioned among the male heirs, although the person taking the father's role sometimes takes half the land and divides the rest equally among the living heirs. Thus in one case a man with three brothers took his father's fields and divided them in half. One-half he kept for himself, and the other half he split among the three brothers.

A problem that frequently emerges at this time is that of the mothers of half siblings—the wives of the dead man. The man who takes over his father's compound or household tends to install his own mother there as a dependent, since most old women are without husbands.[2] If she is a vigorous woman, she can become a powerful person in the household. Indeed in the royal household she has a special title, as we have seen, and was traditionally a noble-woman of great power. The other wives of the dead man must go and live with their own kinsmen, usually one of their sons. In one case this problem was intensified by the fact that the household head, a powerful political leader, had only one son and that by a concubine. When the present head dies, his senior wife, a woman of very powerful upper class affiliations will have to leave and her own slave—a woman very much junior to her—will be installed as the senior woman of the household. Such eventualities can cause tension between the members of any household who know that some day the power and authority relationships within the household will change hands.

In the same vein, siblings tend to drift apart after the death of their father. Even though they live close by one another, their unity and cooperation is not as great after the father's death as before. On the other hand, this can be ameliorated by social and economic factors which are important to keep in mind. Thus if a senior brother takes over a powerful political role, or a lucrative economic one, and

[2] As a woman approaches old age she finds it extremely difficult to remarry and thus most old women are resigned to being beyond the marriageable period of their lives.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

The important point to be made here is that the Kanuri feel that the *barzum*[3] or discipline-respect ingredients of the father-son relationship can be transferred. This does not mean that they forget their own fathers who are their biological kin. However it does mean that they use the norms of the father-son relationship for self-advancement or for relating to other people as they would to their father, in return for those things that they obtain traditionally from a father. Kanuri were always coming to me and addressing me as their father, or asking for a small gift in the hope that they might repay me with some discipline and respect and begin initiating a *tada njima* role for themselves with me as their *abba njima*. However, there is more to initiating the role than simply asking me for a gift or doing a service. In order for it to work there must be *aman* or trust. A man must know when he brings a client into his household that he will try to behave like a son. Even then he waits patiently and watches to see how firm and fast the professed loyalty really is. Most Kanuri say that a year is not too long a period to wait while testing out the strength of such a relationship before actually giving the person (the *tada njima*) some real responsibilities from which both the household head and the client might gain.

This means of adding to a household can produce very extensive groupings under the proper conditions. If a man has a powerful political post, either in the traditional or modern post-colonial administration, his activities in trade, farming, tax collection, or adjudication means that he can use a large following of loyal and obedient clients. The transferability of the father-son relationship allows men to build up such organizations whenever they have the means to maintain them. Kanuri judge success in life not by wealth or power per se, but by the size of a man's following. And the best indication of this is the size of the household and those related households over which he has some control. Thus great households, the greatest of which is that of the Shehu of Bornu, form the upper class group of Kanuri society. Wealthy traders have many *tada njima* who, after their loyalty has been proven, are given goods and money to go out and trade for their superiors. Bornu society is such that powerful men, indeed any man wishing to raise his status, require loyal followers and clients who use the ingredients of the father-son relationship to define their interpersonal relations. Certainly many of the people a man may depend upon are members of his own descent group, but kinsmen differ from clients in a number of important respects. Kinsmen may profit not only by one another's success, but through inheritance they also gain by each other's death. Or if a particular prerogative, say access to political office of some kind, resides in one male line, then an office-holder's male relatives may profit from his dismissal since one of them may be considered as a replacement. Furthermore relationships based on descent cannot be broken completely—some mutual dependence always remains—even though a superior dislikes the services of his descent group member who is serving as his subordinate. Clientship is more rational in this respect since clients can in effect be "fired" for poor performance of their duties. Thus clientship, represented by the *tada njima* relationship, is a flexible and useful tool in the building of Kanuri households and even larger social groupings.

Finally it is important to remember that all of these important relationships are basically those within a household. This is the stage upon which family life

[3] The letter ɔ is pronounced as the "oo" in "look" or "book."

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

Sitting and listening to a group of these young men discussing matters of interest one is struck by the similarities and the differences in their lives as compared to similar groups in western society. Like young men everywhere they discussed the merits of various occupations, the economic returns, the power and prestige to be gained from one or the other type of job, and so on. Unlike their counterparts in western society, they also spend a great deal of time discussing the qualities of "the big men" in Bornu and the benefits received by loyal followers of these men. They are keenly aware, or try to be, of whose fortunes are rising and falling among the big men and listen with great interest to some new tidbit of information to this effect. Like their counterparts elsewhere teenagers learn to smoke cigarettes, gamble, and drink alcoholic beverages during this period. School boys also learn western table manners and take periodic meals in the places that serve western style food.

One of the most important features of a Kanuri boy's adolescence is his choice of training for an occupation. All young boys learn the fundamentals of farming in the households of their youth since almost all compound heads in Bornu, except some in the city, have farms. In some rural villages boys will learn nothing else but farming and probably remain farmers all their lives. On the other hand the majority of Kanuri boys learn another occupation which they will practice during the dry season or the non-farming season. For most boys the choice is determined ahead of time by the elders of the household, or by the economic specializations in their own vicinity. For example, one boy whose father is a salt retailer and who lives with his father in the ward of the dyers has been apprenticed by his father to one of the dyer households. In general boys are expected to take up the occupation of their fathers unless they or their parents have strong desires and an opportunity to do something else. There is much evidence to show that in making the decision the wishes of the young boys were taken into account. Thus one young man remarked that he would never comply with his father's desire that he become a butcher. Instead he started to work with his father's younger brother in the nearby compound and is learning to be a trader in hides and skins. Today a large range of new occupations is opening up; modernization has served to accelerate this degree of freedom simply because there are many more occupations and a wider range of potential income.

Kanuri occupations other than farming usually involve some apprenticeship, especially for young boys. Such training varies with the kind of job being learned, with the age of the boy, and with the nature of the relationship between the boy and the man teaching him the occupation. If an occupation has a higher status or there is an expectation of high income or prestige associated with it, the person doing an apprenticeship must expect a longer training period in return for having been admitted into an advantageous position. Thus truck drivers who make a comparatively high income demand a fee besides three to five years of service from the person taken on as an apprentice. Butchers occupy a low-status position in the society, but they can also earn fairly good incomes and therefore they, too, claim longer than usual apprenticeship. As the boy becomes older, it is expected that his training period will become shorter, whereas the earlier an apprenticeship is begun, the longer the education. This simply reflects Kanuri recognition of the more rapid learning that comes with age.

The terms of the relationship are dictated by the boy and his immediate

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

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The Political Organization

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THE POLITICAL LIFE of Bornu ties togther the entire society into one overall unit so that it has an identity. As far as we know this has been the case for centuries and still is today, so that, although the Kanuri people see themselves and their society as many things, they view it primarily or basically as a political entity. To the people who live there Bornu represents a culture, a language, an ancient history, but more than anything else it represents a kingdom, or sovereign realm whose definition is political. Thus whether anyone belongs to it or not, and how one should behave within its boundaries depends first and foremost on its organization as a polity, that is, as a system in which there are recognized and legitimate means of distributing authority and making decisions at all levels of the society.

Authority distinctions are present in all organizations, and from this point of view all organizations have a political aspect. However, for our purposes it is easier to limit the discussion to the means by which decisions are made and carried out in those particular sectors of social life having some territorial or bureaucratic identity as sub-parts of the emirate government of Bornu. This excludes such things as trade groupings, like that of Ajimi's uncle described in the last chapter in which there is some hierarchy of authority, but which may not be, and often is not, located in one place. It also means that what we are discussing is a system, since each of its parts is clearly connected to the other to form a working whole. Like most other aspects of Bornu life, this system starts with the household as a basic particle and then builds onto it. It is a complicated and interwoven structure of an ancient, majestic, and yet contemporary kingdom whose stability and adaptability are monuments to men's striving for these illusive goals.

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Households, Wards, and Hamlets

As we have seen in Chapter 3 a household can expand and become a group of linked households under the superior authority of a senior man. When a young man, or a man's younger brother, or his apprentice or client, wishes to get mar-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

larly as his representatives. The wakil also makes regular visits to important emirate leaders and tries to maintain a constant check on political developments in the capital and the emirate as a whole. Through this organization and through the giving of gifts and hospitality to visitors and messengers from the capital, as well as cultivating high placed friends, the district head maintains and builds up a communication network through which he obtains a many-sided picture of events in the capital.

District heads are also linked to the capital by their membership in factions that help to make up the political life of the emirate. In pre-colonial times these factions grew out of the allegiance of nobles to the various segments of the royal lineage. This indeed was the reason the succession disputes to the throne could turn into bloody civil wars. These same traditional factions still exist today, but there have been added new ones which involve close alliances between very powerful men in the emirate government. These reflect the weakened authority of the Shehu, and the increase in power and authority of the Native Authority officials in the top positions of the emirate government. District heads linked to more powerful factions receive better information about the course of emirate politics and more protection when they need it than those related to weak ones. Thus one district head might be linked to a member of the royal family who has no official position in the Native Authority and who has little hope of gaining the throne; another might be closely linked to the Waziri or chairman of the Bornu Native Authority Council. The latter district head, because of his factional membership, is in a much stronger position in the emirate political organization as a whole than is the former. These links to the center both official and unofficial must be carefully developed and maintained by a district head. This is especially true when it is realized that a district head like any other member of the Bornu political system operates within two cultural orientations—one western and the other traditional Kanuri. The district head should give gifts to subordinates, to his faction leaders, and to many other powerful people in the state. From a western point of view these can be seen as bribes, while from a Kanuri vantage point they may be looked upon as obligatory and legitimate recognition by the district head of the power and protection that can be wielded by his superiors in the central government of the emirate. Since such expenses are not provided for in the district head's official salary, the means by which he obtains the wealth to make such gifts often involves breaking rules according to strict western civil service standards, although again such activities might be considered legitimate by local tradition.

The central focus of this behavior revolves around tax collection. The district head is seen in western terms to be an agent of government who collects taxes and is paid a salary for this and other services. However, he needs to maintain a large following who are not provided for by government if he is going to collect nomad cattle taxes. These men must ride out over the entire district—often several thousand square miles—to collect the tax. To keep these men as his tax collectors he needs much more revenue than his own salary. If he does not collect the tax, or enough taxes, he will be punished by dismissal or transfer to a smaller less prestigious district. He has very little choice; in order to keep his own organization going and to maintain friendly contact at the center by gift-giving, he must take some of the district's tax revenue for himself. This makes him vulnerable at all times; to comply with some demands which are deemed important he must break others

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

bodied in his title, "commander of the faithful," and is expressed ritually in a number of ways. Thus at the feast celebrating the end of Ramadan (the annual Muslim fast), a special ram of the Shehu is killed by the chief religious leader of the state. No one considering himself a citizen of the emirate and a subject of the Shehu is supposed to kill his own ram for the feast day until the royal ceremony is completed.

At all annual festivals and state occasions, and every Friday to a lesser extent, the Shehu is attended at his palace by his court and representatives of the people. The court includes members of the royal family, title holders, the Native Authority council members, and any district heads who may be in the capital or their city representatives who sit outside the royal courtroom. Into the royal presence come representatives of each Native Authority department, representatives of the religious leaders of the community, a sample of school children, leaders and representatives of the various occupational groupings under their own headmen. Each group gives symbolic pledges of loyalty and obedience to the throne by saying prayers for the health and welfare of the monarch and the state. The people, including the nobles, go down on their knees to the monarch, stand when he stands, remove their shoes in his presence, and speak to him only indirectly using terms of reverence and respect.

It is difficult to assess what real power the Shehu has in the emirate government. The present incumbent is a very old man, and for the last decade or so the bulk of administrative affairs have been handled by the Native Authority Council under the direction of the Waziri. Whether this now indicates a trend toward constitutional monarchy or whether a new, younger and more vigorous Shehu would reassert the power of the throne is a question that is fascinating but at present not capable of being answered. Certainly the Native Authority Council and the various departments under the council are new and growing powers in the contemporary society, but the district heads are formally responsible to the Shehu. Since the district heads are still very powerful members of the political system, a new Shehu could conceivably affect policy and the administration of the emirate very considerably through his influence on these men and their appointments. It is also very possible that he would influence the Native Authority Council itself and appointments to that body. Potentially the office is a very powerful one, and it seems unlikely that its power will diminish in future since the instruments of power are available to anyone occupying the throne who wishes to use them.

The main business of government of the emirate is handled on a day-to-day basis in the Native Authority departments, which are coordinated with similar departments in other emirates of the province under the Bornu Provincial Government which in its turn looks to the Regional Government of Northern Nigeria for policy directives that are regional in scope.

The personnel of the Native Authority departments form what has come to be called a new class in the society. They are salaried bureaucrats who work in offices and generally have some form of western education. They wear wrist watches, read English and vernacular newspapers, listen to the radio for both local, national, and international news, go to political meetings, join civil service associations, and think of themselves as urban even when they are stationed in the rural

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

areas. Their goals are almost universally to obtain more qualifications and to advance in the civil service to higher paid jobs with more authority and prestige.

Recruitment into the departments can be carried out in a variety of ways. An application can be sent to the Native Authority Council or the relevant departments in writing. People seem to think this is not an effective way of obtaining a position, and it is rarely practiced. Another way is to obtain new recruits from among the school graduates of the secondary schools. This is becoming more and more common as time goes on, however it is a highly impersonal technique and thus not attractive to many in the community who still feel that they must have some private, personal relationship with their superiors-to-be before they can obtain any rewards for themselves. Thus it is widely believed that such personal relationships are the primary requisite to enlistment in the civil service, given that the educational qualifications are satisfactory. Thus one young man working in the Native Authority civil service explained it this way:

> If you want a job in the . . . department, one of your relatives should find the name of a person in the department who is known to help people. Your relative then goes to greet him in the evening and gives him some money and perhaps other gifts. The man who can help then tells your relative to come back at such and such a time and he will let him know the result. Then he will try to find a job in the department, probably by using some of the money your relative gave him. Then the job is yours and you are an employee of the Native Authority . . . sometimes it takes a long time.

Certainly young boys with higher educational qualifications have less difficulty obtaining jobs, but as the educational system increases the numbers of its graduates at upper levels, then places in the Native Authority will become less available, and so this particular method of recruitment will in all likelihood remain for some time to come.

The emirate civil service departments have two standards that employees must maintain at all costs. First, they must be competent at their job, and the leaders of the emirate are always interested in raising such levels. Job re-training schemes, and trips by senior department members to other parts of Nigeria or even overseas are becoming more and more common. Secondly, there must be loyalty and obedience to the department. This is traditional and involves the same kind of behavior we have observed in all community relationships involving superiors and subordinates, starting with the household and moving out into the society as a whole. However departments are too large for very intimate contacts and some of the impersonality of modern bureaucracy has entered to make relations somewhat unpredictable. One young man complained that in his department it is essential to dress less well than one's superior or one would be considered overly ambitious, threatening, and untrustworthy. On the other hand it is also important not to dress too poorly or people in authority would consider one a wastrel who spends his money on women, praise-singers, and drink. Again it is, according to many of the younger men, difficult to transfer from one department to another. To transfer, a formal application must be made to one's own department superiors and to the Native Authority Council; if a release is granted, then a further application to some other department can be submitted. Those reporting this procedure said it was

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

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Conclusion

THIS THEN, is the Kanuri society of Bornu as I have come to know it over a period of years. I have left many things out or merely skimmed over them in order to make a major point. There is a rich ceremonial life related to the annual cycle of Islamic festivals; there are beliefs about the nature of the world, how it is constructed and what causes things to happen in it. There is a complicated set of concepts about social rank and class which I have not gone into; and there are, I believe, distinct features of personality that give to Kanuri individuals a set of attitudes that are adapted to their own way of life. Some of these I know about, others, like their personality, I only suspect but cannot as yet prove because of inadequate information. However the features that have been described were those designed to answer the question quoted at the beginning of this book. In the first Chapter I asked, "What are the set of organized activities by which the Kanuri of Bornu have adapted to their environment and created means for the maintenance, continuity, and evolution of their society?" My answer to this question has been to show how a number of different sectors of Kanuri social life are interrelated and built up from the basic unit of society, namely the household organization and the modes of behavior utilized in the household or compound in its everyday activities.

Taking this approach I have been reflecting the opinions and beliefs of my Kanuri informants. In other words, my basic theory about Kanuri society and how it operates is really not my own but that used by the Kanuri themselves when they try to explain their own society in general terms. In trying to instruct me about their culture and how it works, they continually harken back to the household. The household is the basic political unit in Bornu; groups of households link up to form wards, hamlets, villages, and districts. To found a new settlement one or more linked households move out and begin to operate as a semi-independent community. The everyday business of getting a living is organized within a household, and a series of households linked through their household heads can form larger economic organizations for productive or trading purposes. Family life, the crucible of human society, is of course centered within the household. Finally the modes of behavior that one requires in order to adapt to everyday social relationships in the society are learned within the household.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

105 121 182 592 829 44 571 What about larger organizations like the emirate political hierarchy and the trading organizations based on stores or canteens, that is to say, modern business enterprises? These obviously contain people who are not members of the same household. Certainly this is true, but often, as in the trading organizations, junior clerks in the store did at one time live in the household of the store owner or still do live there. Much more important, the Kanuri claim, is the fact that the proper way to behave in a political or economic hierarchy is the way one behaves in a household organization or a set of linked households. The junior in the organization gives *barzum* (or discipline-respect) to his superior and in return he receives the benefits of membership, that is to say, he receives a social and political status, protection, and economic gain, for the loyalty and obedience which he delivers to his superior. This to the Kanuri is the most important single behavior in social life. It is learned in the household and then used to link households and individuals together in all of the organizations that are important in the society as a whole. The inference here is that the society is basically and essentially hierarchical—one in which most relationships are of a superior-subordinate variety—and indeed this is true except for friendship groups that do not, however, carry on many of the fundamental activities in Bornu.

105 121 178 It is because this underlying unity is still so firm and central a feature of Kanuri social life that I have not stressed the fact that my trips to Bornu straddle the historic fact of Nigerian independence. Political independence has brought no change in the way in which the bulk of the Kanuri organize their social life and live out the contents of their daily lives in their households, their villages, and their emirate. These modes of behaving have ancient roots in the area, and independence has not witnessed any widespread attempts to change things or to create new modes of organizing the social life of the emirate. Top administrators [178] are now Nigerians, not British colonial officials, but what and how they administer in Bornu is roughly the same as it was in the pre-independence era of the 1950s. When I spoke to some of the leaders of the emirate in 1965 about their understanding of changes that might occur in the political system or the way in which the emirate was organized, they commented that the system was efficient and could serve as a stable, trustworthy form of local political organization through which any changes might come and still keep Bornu as a viable entity for a long time in Nigeria's future.

What is different today, and different only in degree, is the commitment to modernization on the part of top leadership and the initiative they are willing to show in this regard. The leaders are committed whole-heartedly to expanding [177] western education, obtaining better health services, and decreasing disease. They also hope to increase productivity in agriculture and introduce the beginnings of industrialization into Bornu. Steps are being taken in all directions, and only the future can tell what of the past will actually enter into a future that at least on the surface seems in its ultimate goal to be so different from the majestic past and the present of the Kanuri of Bornu.

648 the actual administrative power. The twenty-one District Heads
648 in Bornu Emirate were appointed by the Shehu, as was the Waziri,
643 and the members of the Shehu's council. Although these appoint-
634 ments formally need not be approved by the British administra-
tion, in practice their approval was necessary.

634 The system of District Heads replaced the feudal absentee
175 landlords who controlled Bornu in the latter half of the nine-
631 teenth century. Many peasants still refer to their District
178 [651] Head as chima, the name for the feudal lord of former times,
since one of the main functions of the District Head is the
[829] collection of taxes. Although many commoners continue to view
the system today much as their ancestors looked upon the polit-
ical system during the days of the Bornu Empire, radical changes
[642] had been brought about. Under the empire actions and decisions
of the feudal lords were subject only to the disapproval of the
[648] Shehu, the absolute ruler. Today a still larger political unit,
the government of Nigeria, maintains a legal system which pro-
tects all citizens though they may not be aware of it. A Kanuri
could appeal out of his own political system, and seek the pro-
tection of a British District Officer against the ruling of his
own Village Head or District Head. Obviously such a move might
have serious repercussions and not many individuals decided to
take the step. Nevertheless, the alternative existed.

692 In accordance with the British practice of ruling through
779 native institutions where possible, the formal legal system of
Northern Nigeria continued to be Islamic law, more precisely

665 178 Movement (BYM) has become a powerful force in Maiduguri where it elected both representatives in a direct election in 1956. This represented a serious blow to the traditional Kanuri ruling class, and is an indication of important changes in attitude toward traditional leadership in Kanuri culture. It is interesting to note that these changes have been occurring among the most acculturated segments of the population, in urban Maiduguri.

2. Education.

871 177 [872] Accompanying British rule, a general education system has been introduced in Bornu. Primary schools exist in all the larger towns, staffed by Kanuri teachers who speak English and have received some training as teachers. Of the school age 871 population only two to three per cent actually attend. Parents • 829 resist sending their children to the schools as they see little to be gained in school attendance, and the child, when sent to [792] school, is an economic loss to the family. They would rather send their children to Kanuri Malams, scholars of the Koran, where they are taught to pray, and to read the Koran by rote. If a child should show aptitude in such studies he would be encouraged to continue studying the Koran with important Malams. [554] Such study is considered more vital, more important, more prestigeful and ultimately more useful than study in the primary school.

871 Since attendance in the schools is to a certain extent

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so results in loss of esteem.[1] A pious and god-fearing man, among the Kanuri, will have earned the respect of his neighbors so long as he continues to behave in that fashion. On the other hand, a Malam of the Koran is respected because he belongs to a category of individuals which has high prestige in Kanuri society. Knowing that he is a Malam, people will treat him with respect. Should he not behave as Malams typically behave, he would suffer a loss of esteem. In this case, piety and study of the Koran are important values in Kanuri society, so that individuals who stress those values in their own behavior are accorded prestige.

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The fourth and final variable which acts as a determinant in the system of social stratification is whether a man has been born a free-man (kambe) or a slave (kalya). This defines his specific relationship to another man, his master, should he have been born a slave, but it has no effect on the three previous variables discussed above. It does not follow that a man born a slave necessarily ranks low in power, wealth or prestige. There is a certain amount of independence in the operation of each of the four variables.

1. Royalty and Aristocracy.

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In pre-contact times social stratification was rigid, and had institutional support and recognition in two customs: the

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1. usage here is according to Ralph Linton, The Cultural Background of Personality, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1945), pp. 73-74.

698 642 178 565 ence, British administrative officers made all final policy decisions. Since the system of social stratification finds its support in the political organization of the Kanuri state, and since that state is no longer the ultimate authority of the land, one might expect great changes in the social system today. While significant changes have been occurring, the old system of social stratification has been able to survive, in certain respects supported and bolstered by British colonial rule. It continues to shape Kanuri society today and to adapt itself to new conditions and new demands.

[693] The Shehu and the royal family are still present, and the Shehu continues to wield political power. Though a British resident was the ultimate authority, he acted through the Shehu and [829] the Shehu's council. In the eyes of the Kanuri people, the Shehu still was the symbol of the Kanuri state, though all Kanuri recognized that the White man (nasara) was present as super-authority.

178 565 634 Titled nobility are still present, and retain much of their political power since they still control the great majority of District Headships. It is striking to note how many Ajias, who replaced the chimas of old, are the heads of old noble families and the present holders of great Kanuri titles, [829] both slave and free. The descendants of the chimas are the bulk of the Ajias, so it is not surprising that the talaka continue to view them as chimas and to use the term in referring to their present Ajia.

GEIDAM

627 663 661 Alkalis as Yerima is with Alkali Baba Kura, but Yerima would put his influence to use only when affairs arise which directly concern him.

627 • 829 671 In the eyes of talaka, sholo is the major means for keeping the peace. They do not distinguish sharply between the resolution of conflicts through sholo and through judgments handed down in the courtroom. The Kanuri do not conceive of an impartial legal system which grants all individuals equal protection. Law is conceived of as mediation granted by particular individuals, some more trustworthy than others. Whether one brings one's complaint before the Ajia, the Alkali, or the Lowan depends on whether one has greater trust in the Ajia, the Alkali, or the Lowan. In any case, one brings one's complaint to be heard by a single man, with his particular whims, idiosyncracies and prejudices, and one chooses the man in whom one has the greatest confidence. According to the British view, sholo given by an Ajia or Lowan is not permitted,and is therefore not binding on the parties involved. A man who has received an unfavorable decision in sholo can complain to the court and the decision will be overruled. The Ajia or Lowan who heard the case will have difficulty because of it. This rarely happens because the talaka sees the situation from an entirely different viewpoint. When he brings a case for sholo and receives an adverse ruling, the dispute must end there as he has done everything possible for him to do in the situation, particularly if no bribes have been given (to his knowledge)

[GEIDAM]

627 and he has had an opportunity to present his side of the dis-
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671 pute. If he feels that the mediator has been bribed and the
[626] case has not been properly handled, he knows that he must never bring a case for sholo before that Ajia or Lowan again and he will let his relatives, friends, and neighbors know what occurred. If a decision has been against him, and he has no reason to suspect that it was not fairly given, then he cannot take the case for further sholo, since his case has already been decided. Taking his case before the Alkali would be to take it once again for sholo, and if he had trusted the Alkali more than he did the Lowan who originally gave sholo in the case, he would have brought his complaint directly to the Al-
[693] kali in the first place. In addition, the court exacts wushira from the winner, more than is paid in sholo, as well as other fees paid to police who bring in witnesses, and to court appointed assessors of property, in property disputes.

4. Taxation and the role of kabuna.

663 The two primary responsibilities of a Kanuri political of-
651 ficial are to properly administer his territory and to collect taxes. The first duty involves the handling of disputes and
[565] maintaining adequate control over subordinates. So long as the traditional social system remains in effect, each class of individual will know its place, talaka will come to those in authority for sholo, subordinates will fear and respect their superiors, and those in power will not usurp their power by unduly exploiting the populace.

[GEIDAM]

634 dam once again, it is evident that one group is a modern group
178 which has no counterpart in traditional Kanuri society. This
177 554 is a group of NA appointees including the Primary School Head-
master and the three school teachers, the Agricultural expert,
the Veterinary, the Hides and Skins Inspector, the Forestry
expert, the Local Government Advisor, the Adult Education Organ-
[191] izer, the Dispenser, and the Sanitation Inspector. All of these
[871] individuals have been educated in Western schools, most through
[963] secondary school, and all speak some English. They have all
received specialized training for their jobs. In addition,
all are young men or young adult men. Because they have all
been educated, they are addressed as "Malam," an extension of
the term for a Koranic scholar to new areas of scholarship.
(They will be referred to henceforth as "NA Malams".)

634 177 554 565 871 Despite the fact that the use of the term Malam indicates
a general recognition of their scholarly attainments, the NA
Malams are a part of the political system, under the jurisdic-
tion of the Ajia. Most of the NA Malams in Geidam are sons of
Lowans or Ajias, or have some direct connection with the house-
hold of a Lowan or Ajia. This is because the aristocracy and
those in political power have been more likely to send their
[829] sons to school than the talaka. Talaka are loath to send
their children to the Western school as they are needed at
home to assist in farming, and because parents see nothing to
[555] be gained by sending one's child to the school. Lowans, how-
ever, are themselves pressured to set a good example, and they

school, or work out a compromise; none would send a son solely to the Malam. The Koranic Malams also remained consistent with their previous answers. None would send a son to any one but a Koranic Malam. The Low-status group would tend to send their sons to the Koranic Malam, as they indicated in their answers to the previous question. The remaining three groups (Canteen Operators, Craftsmen, and Talaka) are fairly evenly divided between the two choices. All three groups appear to have shifted somewhat from their answers in Table XXX, and lean more in the direction of the Koranic Malam than they indicated earlier. The Canteen Operators in particular appear to have shifted in the direction of a compromise solution, and three of the six individuals who answered in this way are to be found among the Canteen Operators.

Another revealing area is that of the various occupations which individuals would like. Some are realistic aspirations, while others, particularly in the case of older people, border on fantasy. Eight categories have been distinguished in Table XXXII. Of these, the category of Trader (column 2) is the most popular by far. This is listed separately from "trading in the market-place" (column 3) because in the latter case individuals specifically indicated that they saw themselves as petty traders who operated in the market-place. The two categories might, however, be considered as one, since both are involved in the same general sort of activity--trade. Considered together, 42 per cent of the sample selected trade as the desired occupa-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 307]

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[For information on Kanuri ideas about Western society and items of Western culture, as well as their attitudes toward native practices and norms, see category 116, pp. 249-327.]

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642 kingdom. It is probable that the early state was organized as a group of clans, with one clan and a lineage within it as the ruling group. There is the possibility that this dominant group was an intrusive one, but this point has been so over-stressed with no substantiating data by other writers, that it would be wiser to leave it until sufficient archeological research has been done.

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• 829 After the move to Bornu and the founding of the capital of Birni Gasargamo we have some contemporary data with which to assess the life of the times. Ibn Fartua expresses the feelings of a chief servant of the Mai concerning the ethical nature of the state in the 16th century. He says that " . . .every people relies on imitation of its leaders. The leader goes before and the people follow him. He leads them to the Garden as it were by a bridle, after giving the Book of Direction, glad tidings about the Faith, right direction, and sure guidance in the path of law. So every man knows his rights and his obligations to others. Most excellent is the fame of just deeds, and justice on the part of a Mai for one day is equal to service of God for sixty years . . . A place where there is an evil Mai is better than a place which has none." (1) Thus the structural position of the Mai is extolled as being even more important than its functions, for when a leader is present every man knows his relationship to other men, and the people are enjoined to feel blessed at the fact of political leadership per se.

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631 The political organization of Bornu during the second florescence of the kingdom was structured outwards from the capital at Birni Gazaragamo with the cardinal directions of the State under the military protection of four titled noblemen. The south was under the Yuroma or chief eunuch; the north was held by the Mustrema (also a eunuch); the east by the Kaigama (a

(1) Ahmed ibn Fartua, op. cit. pp.10-11.

571 [602] [601] joking takes the form (usually) of the grandparent-grandchild relationship. The younger refers to and addresses the elder as kaka (grandparent) while the elder may refer to the younger as diwo (grandchild) or address him as kaka. Joking between occupations was observed more frequently than between ethnic groups, while no [829] inter-clan joking was seen at all. Most people do not know the clan membership of the people they associate with in their everyday life.

Friendship and Fondness Relations (numkam)

572 602 The friendship and/or fondness relationships include those interpersonal relations wherein ego finds mutual affection, sympathy and community of interests. As a norm or dimension of behaviour it is much less formalized in the kinship system (indeed in society as a whole) when compared with shame, respect and joking relations. These are regarded as fairly distinct aspects of interpersonal relations which involve some kind of a behavioural criterion or marker, like not eating out of the same bowl, or joking [128] about sexual intercourse, etc. Notwithstanding the possibility of its creation by the anthropologist, rather than the people themselves, as a category of kinship behaviour of the same order as the others, numkam (friendship) seems to be a characteristic of kinship relations as it is of any human situation wherein people live, eat, play, earn their living and feel themselves to make up a unity of some sort.

603 There is a high degree of expressive and affective fondness found in the joking relationships between grandparents and grandchildren which centers, as we have seen, most intensively around the namesake attribute of the same relationship. Because of

572 to include as many people as possible under the category of friend. On the other side of the question, what we in our culture would consider a very close friendship can be restricted or terminated for any one of a number of reasons, running from a shift in residence 572 to uneven upward mobility on the part of the friends. When friends 201 actually do have to part, great protestations of affection and sadness are often made at the time of leave-taking, especially and in much greater part, by the person remaining behind. Occasions like this are not uncommon. On one of these, a local official had received a much higher office in the capital. At a small gathering of his friends before his departure, heavy emotional displays of sadness and actual bereavement were made by many of his friends — they were losing such a good friend — why was he leaving them? — couldn't he stay? — did he realise how sad he was making them all feel? — he would forget them all now — etc. There was no mention whatsoever of his good fortune in receiving such an honourable and prestigeful promotion in the State. The sadness seemed more an expression of the group's dissatisfaction with their friend's departure than one of melancholy at his leaving, and it lasted only until his departure on the part of all but his very close ashirmanzé (intimate friend) who because of other circumstances in the situation had extremely few real friends and, therefore, suffered a more profound loss.

• 829 There is a cultural evaluation of interpersonal relations which underlies all Kanuri attitudes about their social life. Relationships achieved and/or ascribed are good, and more importantly, they are potentially profitable and satisfying phenomena. Conse-

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e 829 quently, any informant will tell of a host of friends that he possesses. Contrarily, the loss or lessening of interaction in any relationship is a bad thing, and a departing friend is mourned at during his leaving as a loss to self and admonished over and over again not to forget his friends either directly — "Don't forget me," — or indirectly — "You will forget me now." —. This explains why no one mentioned the official's good luck in obtaining a promotion, the total emphasis being on the loss which his good fortune had inflicted on his friends. However, he was still a friend and would always be referred to as such if they were questioned. Thus, many of the friendships reported on are due to past associations now inactive, or often because of hoped-for associations in the future. Because of this constant interplay of friendship as a value per se with the non-permanent quality of many relationships through time the Kanuri often seem to the Western observer to lack "sincerity" in the emotional quality of their friendships except in rare cases of extreme intimacy. However, even in the latter a long-term basis is not necessarily a concomitant of mutual intimacy. Since it is good and desirable to have as many friends as possible, from previous associations as well as in terms of future possibilities, the social and physical mobility and the sheer numbers of such relationships dictate that an individual cannot have an expressive-affective relationship with all of them. Nor can he expect or predict when a really operative friendship (even in the kinship system) may be broken. Consequently, he learns to anticipate the possible break-up of any particular interpersonal relation at any time as part of his social interactions and concentrates, if he is successful in his culture,

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829 on learning how to create as many relationships as possible for himself to cover the inevitable break-ups which occur in present social relations. As a result, to a Western observer, the friendhip relations may seem to have a superficial quality which involves many references to good friends, what they do and will do for ego, with subsequently very little proof of the validity of such claims. Although certainly the emotional content can be and is, in many ways, as real and sincere as in any comparable human situation anywhere. The essential difference here is the institutionalized recognition and acceptance of the brittleness of interpersonal relations as a necessary behavioural aspect of a complex social organisation which has been operating over a wide territory and population through a long history. Our social reality is not so different, but our culture has idealized Damon and Pythias.

Residence Patterns

592 Although it is a basic tenet in the present discussion
[571] that Kanuri behavioural norms and the texture of interpersonal rela-
[602] tions in the total society have their foundations in the kinship system, it must also be realized that the fundamental unit of social organization in which these behaviours operate is the compound or household (fato). This is a walled-in area which encloses a readily
592 identifiable group in the community. The walls are of mud or grass
351 matting depending on the socio-economic level of the householder and the community at large, as well as upon a cheap abundant supply of clay-mud. Magumeri had only one mud walled compound, that of the District Head, while other towns such as Geidam have almost all compounds enclosed with mud walls. The walls are usually about five feet tall, but vary from place to place.

592 supporting his widowed mother.

592 Although a complete census coverage of residence units,
125 in order to determine the range and variation of residence patterns
171 proved unfeasible,(1) personal observations and first-hand acquaintance with 25-30 households over a one-year period brought out somewhat similar conclusions to Smith's analysis of his Hausa census material.(2)

592 There are two general types of household groupings linked
571 to one another through time in a roughly cyclical process of fission
[596] and fusion. The first type is that of a man, wife or wives, and
[829] children and son's wives. This is an ideal pattern in the culture. In anthropological terms it is a patrilocal extended family organisation with the possible addition of a servant or a tada njima (son of the house - like a son, but non-kin). From this traditionally valued structure two forms can emerge or develop. The son and/or servant may move off and set up his own household, either close by or in a distant locality depending upon political and economic factors. This is just about ready to happen in the diagram above. The son (7) has his own farm, wife, child and non-agricultural source of income, all independent of the compound head. If he decides on another wife he will find his father's compound cramping to his own expanding nuclear family unit requirements and move to a new location close by. Desire for autonomous headship of his own family grouping plus the possible squabbles between co-wives which must traditionally be suppressed before his own parents will also tend to determine his decision to move. In this particular case he will not move far

123 (1) The census was planned and arranged for but was given up for political reasons. The writer was assured by close friends that in the contemporary atmosphere of tax fears the census program would disturb ultimate rapport objectives in the community.
125 (2) Smith, M.G., op. cit. pp. 19-28.

614 origin story, often associating the founder with the Prophet. For example, the following story was related by an informant about the origins of the tèrà clan:

> One day a barber was shaving the Prophet's head. The man made a mistake and cut the Prophet's scalp. Blood came out and the barber drank it. Everyone who comes from that barber is tèrà. They are not connected with chiefs, they are common people but they are close to the Prophet -- they are sherib, fire will not burn them.

Some informants felt that in the old days there may have been a tendency for clan endogamy, not as a sanctioned custom, but as a matter of mere frequency. No one ever heard of any exogamous rules, or ever connected the clans to any natural species of flora and fauna.

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565 Among some of the high status groups and some of the very high status families of Bornu, not only clan membership is known but also a series of maximal lineages within the clan to which the name of an original founder (not mythical as in the case of the clan) is attached. Most Kanuri have heard of the Sefuwa lineage of the Magumi clan. This was the royal lineage of pre-nineteenth century Bornu. No rules of marriage were elicited for this grouping.

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• 829 Questions about clan to younger Kanuri and even older ones in some cases often brought out (after tribal affiliation) residential associations. Thus, a peasant informant would relate how his daughter had been married to a man whose clan was Kanuri. Continued questioning on the same point would bring out the reply that the son-in-law's sub-clan was Maiduguri; in other words, the name of his town.

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121 On the basis of this data, it is concluded that Kanuri clans and maximal lineages have very little, if any, functioning significance in the contemporary society.

593 activities. That is to say, culturally speaking, there is an ideology
[[124 of male dominance in the husband-wife relationship. This prescription for male superiority was enacted one day by a female entertainer who attempted to teach the anthropologist's wife the proper manner for approaching the presence of a husband. She came in as if bearing food and went down on her knees with her head bowed to one side and eyes downcast, while demurely presenting the offering to her lord and master, and then quietly removing herself. Although this was all performed in a theatrical manner, the attitude of submissiveness was the lesson
833 being taught. Again, although sexual experimentation is highly thought
562 of by some males, it is generally frowned on for the male to assume a position underneath the woman during coitus. This is rationalized by the belief that the semen will run back into the male and "go bad", causing disease, i.e. something bad will result from a male allowing
827 a woman to lie on top of him. This is reminiscent of the claim of one
554 very high ranking Kanuri nobleman who, when discussing apartment buildings in America, disdained this architectural concept as distateful to himself, unless only he and people of equal rank were allowed living quarters on the top floor.

593 The observed facts of interpersonal relations in marriage
183 are enormously various, and a full circle of almost complete conformity to complete denial of the cultural ideal can be seen in almost any Bornu town where there is a representative sample of the various strata of Kanuri society. The following are some of the major variables operating in the marriage relationship which affect the extent of denial or conformity to the ideology of male dominance.

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183 of the above variables make such conformity to cultural patterns extremely difficult among the lower status ranks of the population, i.e., for most of the people.

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562 Closely associated with the above factors, but not directly determinative of male dominance, are the Kanuri patterns of marital fidelity and divorce. Marital chastity is considered an ideal behaviour norm for both men and women, although almost the entire weight of the prescription falls upon the married woman, which is a logical consequence [554] of the cultural ideal of male dominance. Male marital chastity is given only sham acceptance as an ethical standard by most men, except for the most highly moral, such as some religious leaders aspire to, or very respectable judges, or any other person who wishes to set himself up as a paragon of virtue and reap the benefits of status which such a reputation confers.(1)

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[595] Men may marry up to four wives in the Muslim world and because there are always gower (divorced women) in Bornu who are available sexually to men, there are a great deal of extra-marital sexual relations by men which for all intents and purposes are culturally sanctioned. In other words, social reality and every day ethical standards give to men much freedom of sexual behaviour at all times whether or not they are married. This holds true for a bachelor, as it does for a man with one, two, three or four wives. On the other hand, a woman is supposed to turn on and off her sexual freedom in and out of marriage. While married, cultural norms prescribe that she make herself

[829]
[709] (1) The Kanuri believe that strict adherence to all moral injunctions of their culture is so difficult and so rare that any person actually practicing such a life of complete moral integrity is very "powerful." His sanctity is so great as to render his person actually dangerous; so much so, it is related, that even the clothes of such a man have power to inflict good or evil on others.

837 628 established small wards and hamlets are the bases of networks of relationships among the males. Men tend to find extra-marital partners in wards, hamlets, and towns other than their own, within the marketing community, since the women of their own ward or hamlet are usually the wives of their close friends and relatives.

586 It must not be supposed from the above discussion that there is any positive evaluation of divorce in Kanuri culture. On the contrary, long marriages are valued and divorce is considered by many to [123] be a melancholy breakdown of relationship. Thus the writer was asked on numerous occasions to use his prestige in the community in order to re-unite separated couples.

581 585 This desire for long marriages is expressed ritually at the formalization ceremony (sada'a) on the day of the marriage. After the fatiha[1] prayer has been said by the assembled males, it is customary for [829] the person who has been married the longest to stand up first. If a European is present he fills the function, not because of his superior status, but because European marriages are well known for their durability. Informants stated that this little ritual was an expression of hope and a blessing on the present marriage for its long duration.

581 Personality factors, mutual affection and trust, preferential marriage, economic benefits, prestige accorded by the union to either party and/or their families can all contribute to the stability of marriage. Furthermore, it may be generalized that the longer the term of marriage between a man and a woman, the greater the chance that 586 their marriage will continue. Most divorces seem to take place in the first two years of marriage for non-virgin marriages, and after about four to five years in the case of first marriages (of females).

(1) The first verse of the Koran.

3: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1960 M514 Kanuri M814

and complexity of stratification.(1) Or to put it another way, these differences are quantitative not qualitative.

The concept of class is restricted in its application to societies having greater ranges and more dimensions of stratification, either through conquest(s) or peaceful elaboration and differentiation. The chief characteristics of class are, (1) its somewhat distinctive style of life within the overall culture of the society, and (2) the differential rankings accorded to class status as a rank among others within the total society.

Of the two concepts, class and stratification, it is felt here that the latter is the more useful. The Kanuri, themselves, recognize classes in their society but, unless the dimensions of stratification are thoroughly understood, the differentiation of Kanuri society is a mystery, which the class concept alone cannot penetrate.

The Dimensions of Stratification

Tribal Membership

The Kanuri, like many other peoples all over the world, take a great pride in their culture, its religion, language, social organization, and its history, some of which is known by everyone. As far as can be reported without any precise measurement the tribe is largely endogamous,(2) although there is more inter-tribal marriage in the capital where language barriers count for less because of the growing use of Hausa as well as Kanuri.

There is a value placed upon a platonic or ideal quality of

(1) cf. Smith, M.G., On Segmentary Lineage Systems, op. cit. He does the same thing in his analysis of state and stateless societies.

(2) In Magumeri among approximately seventy households, there were six marriages of men or woman which included non-Kanuri spouses. One of these was of a recent Muslim convert to a Kanuri woman, another was of a pagan man with two rather pariah Kanuri women, while the rest were all between non-Kanuri Muslims.

829 things when they can be identified as Kanuri. If things get farther away from this Kanuri-ness they can be different from, worse than, or better than, the ideal Kanuri attribute. Thus a Fulani calabash is not good or bad, but it is not Kanuri — it is a different jili (i.e. variety). Facial features, on the other hand, either approach this ideal of Kanuri-ness, which is good, or differ widely from it, which is bad or ugly or not "the pure one" as one English-speaking informant declared. Customs, objects, morals, etiquette, dress, in fact the whole gamut of Kanuri-ness which is generally speaking evaluated as good. In some respects, for example, the Kanuri practice of asking for things continually from others or the widespread practice of adultery, this ideal Kanuri-ness is not the summum bonum. Nevertheless even when informants exclaim Kai Kanuri dibi dea (Wow! Kanuri are wicked) in response to some story of adultery or immorality in general, there seems to be a certain amount of pride expressed in this judgement because of the Kanuri flavour of the misdemeanor.(1)

177 The Bornu Emirate has throughout its long history always had contacts with other ethnic groups both within and beyond its borders. Although the Kanuri are the majority group in Bornu, they are in constant contact with many other ethnic groups, especially in the larger centres. 162 563 Almost every town of over one thousand population has a pagan ward; slightly larger centres have a Hausa quarter, and often politically dependent (settled) Fulani or Shuwa hamlets nearby. Larger towns like Maiduguri, Nguru, Geidam, Dikwa or Damaturu have Ibo, Yoruba and sometimes European trading elements living in the town as well. Maiduguri, the

(1) The Kanuri word dibi means bad, wicked, immoral in one sense. However, it can also be used as an expression of wonder, delight or amazement. For example, it could be elicited from a peasant on his first experience with a typewriter, or the insides of a camera.

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563 capital, has, besides all these, a large Arab-speaking population from the Near East and the Sudan as well as the European Reservation for commercial and government personnel.

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829 In this situation of constant confrontation and to some extent interaction with other ethnic groups, evaluation of status by ethnic membership takes place. The Kanuri vary widely in their disposition to rank own-group as having the highest status among all the other peoples that they are in contact with or about whom they have any information. Almost universally Europeans are accorded high status (sometimes higher than own-group) as an ethnic group. This stems from their superior political and economic positions as administrators and traders. Thus, informants, unless they are well travelled or sophisticated city dwellers, are shocked and surprised to hear that there are prisons in England which house murderers, thieves and scoundrels, or that there are people in England who can be classed as labourers. In their eyes and experience, Englishmen have never been low status persons. Indeed one of the common expressions among the peasants is "Nasara Mai" (Europeans are kings). One informant, during a discussion of religious edicts on morality and the relation of these to the practicalities of everyday life, interjected a surprising comment on the relation of morality to life. He claimed that the only true Muslims in the world were Englishmen, since they were the only people who ever told the truth.

The Arabas (i.e. Arabic speakers, with the exception of the Shuwa nomads) like the Europeans, have very little but formal social con-
[826] tacts with the Kanuri and are highly rated as an ethnic group. The Arab facial features and skin colour are the models for what is the most attractive and pleasing (therefore the ideal Kanuri) physical types. The

3: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1960 MS14 Kanuri MS14

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• 829 place of the Arabs as the original Muslims and the people of the Koran give them an added historically derived status to the Kanuri, who believe themselves to have originally come from Yemen.

[198] Similar historical experiences, much contact over a protract-
[171] ed time period, and very similar socio-political patterns and ecological adjustments, as well as the widespread use of Hausa as a lingua franca tend to maintain feelings of affinity by the Kanuri for the other Muslim peoples of Northern Nigeria, especially the Hausa. However, this is true as well for the settled Fulani and Shuwa peoples, while the nomadic elements in these latter groups are somewhat mistrusted as having no definite territorial base, at least while passing through on transhumance. The Kanuri associate territoriality with law and order and thus feel nomads to be dangerous here-today-gone-tomorrow people over whom legitimate social control is often difficult. Thus the first time a large group of nomads camped near Maguneri, friends warned the writer continually to lock up everything at night now that the nomads were in the vicinity.

The Shuwa are an Arabic-speaking nomadic group of the central and eastern Sudan (1) whose women are considered particularly attractive to the Kanuri. Their Arabic language and connection to the east, and the ease with which they acculturate to Kanuri society when they settle, make them a highly rated group in the society. Kanuri individuals with Shuwa mothers are proud of the fact and often incorporate it into their name.
[551] To take a name signifying a connection to own-mother is quite common in Bornu but not so widely practised when the status of own-mother is low.

The Kanuri rank all pagan groups as having lower status than themselves. An informant who stems from a pagan background, but who has

(1) Personal communication from Mr. Fred Thomas, Ford Foundation Research Fellow, 1954-55.

563 grown up as a Muslim, will only speak of his background reluctantly or
• 829 confidentially. Pagan groups in Kanuri towns, who are usually Banana or Gwoza peoples from the Cameroons, manifest many of the characteristics typically associated with minority groups everywhere. They often speak of the equality of all men in the eyes of God, and proclaim privately that they are just as good and deserving of dignity and respect as the Kanuri majority. Stories of unfair treatment and all kinds of unjust discrimination are easily elicited. The Kanuri, on the other hand, openly despise them, referring to them as a general class of lower status people - kurdi (infidels) who were used as slaves in the old days. Despite these status differentials, the pagans in the Kanuri towns live in a
[464] symbiotic relationship with the majority group. They supply the Kanuri
[273] with a cheap cash labour supply and brew the liquor that many Kanuri
[461] like to drink but would consider abhorrent to manufacture. The pagans obtain, therefore, a large ready market for their products (i.e. their brew, and their unskilled manual labour), because of the low regard in which these two activities are held by the Kanuri.

Pagans who are known to have Muslim sectors, such as the Babur tribe of southern Bornu or the Yoruba of western Nigeria are still regarded as low status but are not nearly so unanimously despised as the local brewers of beer with whom the Kanuri have daily contacts. It is probable that the existence of urban classes and a nobility among the Babur and the Yoruba which is originally absent among the Gwoza and the Banana, aids in differentiating their status as ethnic groups for the Kanuri.

The Ibo people of south-east Nigeria are considered to come under the rubric of the despised pagan group, although it is known that

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563 most of them (whom the Kanuri contact) are Christians. Informants re-
• 829 marked that Ibo Christianity, like all the rest of their European skills, is newly acquired.(1) The widespread attitude towards Ibos is reflected in the oft repeated stereotype about their alleged cannibalistic practices (Hizmali kan shrin - Ibos eat people) which indicates the Kanuri ambivalence towards this group.(2) They are despised but feared at the same time. This is due primarily to the much greater degree of westernization of the Ibo generally as compared to the Kanuri. Iboland in the eastern region of Nigeria is overpopulated and yet has a long history of mission education. Because of the need for western trained personnal over all of Nigeria, there has been an emigration of Ibo mechanics, clerks, postmasters, traders, truckers, builders, lawyers and even a doctor or two to all parts of the country. Thus a despised pagan group is seen to have more income, higher status jobs, more facility with western type liti-

(1) One western educated Kanuri told the writer that the high numbers of educated Ibos proved that they (the Ibos) knew how to bribe Europeans into giving them qualifying certificates and higher degrees.

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(192)(2) The notion of "eating" also includes the ideal of being cheated, which the Kanuri feel is always a strong possibility in their dealings with Ibos. The stories of Ibo cannibalism are rife all over northern Nigeria — with strong support from credulent Europeans who share the general belief. The empirical validity of these stories is unknown to the writer — however, they seem to have very little basis in fact in the contemporary society, and are even somewhat doubtful for the aboriginal culture of the Ibo. There is no mention of cannibalism in Forde, D. & Jones, G. I., The Ibo and Ibibio-Speaking People of South-Eastern Nigeria, (1950). The only reference to the subject in Meek, C.K., Law and Authority in Nigeria (1937) p. 67, is to a fright given to initiates by one of the priests that their testicles may be eaten during the course of the initiation ceremony. Finally, Talbot, P.A., In the Shadow of the Bush (1912), gives one reference to a conversation in the Calabar region (p.246) in which the people told him that cannibalistic rituals were practised "up until quite recently". He mentions cannibalism again (p. 260) giving his source of information to be his carrier boys, who were strangers to the particular group he describes as having "the filed teeth and the shrunken appearance usually associated with cannibal rites". Although this is by no means a complete survey of the literature it suggests a lack of empirical validity in the last few decades at least, for the practice of Ibo cannibalism.

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3: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1960 M514 Kanuri MS14

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gation, and a national political organization seeking reforms and power in the local scene.(1) Historically their position as a pagan group puts them in the low status position of kurdi (infidels) by Kanuri standards, but the acquisition of European culture and their ability to make acculturated skills work for the benefit provoke covert feelings of admiration, jealousy, and fear on the part of the indigenous population of Bornu.

That there is some ambivalence in the Kanuri attitudes towards ethnic groups they rank as high (or higher) than themselves is easily discovered in conversation with persons who have more contact with Arabs and/or Europeans. Whether or not this means that the ambivalence increases with the amount of interpersonal contact it is difficult to say with present knowledge, although this could be considered as one hypothesis which explains the facts, until further tests are carried out. Peasants do not think comparatively about whether or not they are in some respects as good, better, or worse than Arabs and/or Europeans. They accord these groups high status among the "big" people of their world, whose particular place in the scheme of things is rather vague and far away from their own immediate experience but, nonetheless, rich and powerful. However, for those in close contact with Arabs and Europeans, aggressive, resentful remarks about the behaviour of these groups are common. Arabs are spoken of as dishonest traders who cheat

[441] good Kanuri of their rightful profits. Since the Arabs maintain a large proportion of the available credit from the European trading companies, they do objectively limit the expansion of Kanuri entrepreneurial activity.(2)

(1) Coleman, J.S. Nigeria: Background to Nationalism (1958), Chap. 16
(2) See below, pp. 322-324.

3: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1960 MS14 Kanuri MS14

563 Young Kanuri civil servants who are in closer contact with
* 829 Europeans than the peasant complain of the meagreness of European hos-
[554] pitality and the haughtiness of this group. Traditionally, Kanuri high status is associated with much hospitality and gift giving. The ultimate power of dismissal which the Europeans hold in their hands and the difficulty in understanding or living up to their different standards of performance, also tend to produce antagonism and resentment as well as the admission of high status to the European group.

This attitude toward Europeans was exemplified by one Kanuri civil servant who interjected his belief about the end of the world into a discussion of Kanuri past achievements in relation to their present status as a group in the world and Nigeria in particular. "When that day arrives (the end of the world)", he said, "all the machines of the Europeans, all their guns, their automobiles, aeroplanes, ships, radios, refrigerators, and their 'power' (arsiyi, see below pp.225 -228) would be gone and the Kanuri will once again be a great nation and take all the
[555] Ibos for their slaves." The other four Kanuri participants in the conversation knew about the end of the world, but had never heard of this particular interpretation, which, however, they tended to believe because of the speaker's scholarly status as a reader and writer of Arabic.

125 Questionnaire data obtained from one hundred and forty-seven (1)
563 Kanuri adolescents (thirteen to nineteen years old) in Maiduguri from
829 the Senior Primary School and the Secondary School tend to support the qualitative material gathered separately. The boys were asked to rank

(1) There were originally one hundred and sixty-eight children in the school population who responded to the questionnaire, but data from twenty-one have been deleted for present purposes because of the membership in other than Kanuri groups. There is a possibility that some of the students did not report their tribal backgrounds correctly, which may have added to the spread of deviation in the responses.

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829 eighteen tribes (including "Europeans") on a printed sheet, using the following instructions, which were given in Kanuri.[1]

(1) Check the sheet as I read it through aloud and make sure you can all understand the printing. Only students who can read and speak Kanuri should take this test. Are there any questions about the printing of the words?

(2) If Allah were to give you all the power in the world to do anything you wished, from which of the following tribes (later occupations) listed on the sheet would you most like to obtain a faro (a virgin bride) for your wife? Make a mark (1) on the sheet beside that tribe, the tribe you would like second best, mark (2) and so on.

(3) You must choose all the tribes, not only the ones you like.

(4) You should also remember that when you put a very high number beside the tribe (or occupation) this means that you are saying that you really do not like this tribe (or occupation) at all, in fact you dislike it.

Since it is a Kanuri practice to rate people as "number one" or "number two" in terms of his position along some dimension such as political power, scholarly learning, etc., this type of rank ordering in data collection seemed to be more congruent with traditional modes of evaluation rather than other statistical devices which are commonly used for the same purpose, such as paired comparisons or the rating of judgements on some scale made up by the researcher. The results are presented in the table below.

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[128] It should be noted that the arrangement of choices is quite similar to that discussed earlier, the data for which was derived from field interviews with adult informants. Two Muslim groups, the Tubo and more strongly the Tuareg, are ranked low. This can be accounted for by their historical relation to the Kanuri as raiders and warring tribes,

(1) The questionnaire was administered by Kanuri teachers in the classrooms. Three European teachers were replaced by three Kanuri-speaking ones. These included the writer, his wife, and Mrs. A. Roeman. All participating Kanuri teachers took "dry runs" of the test themselves in an instruction session before giving it to their students.

[Text continues on p. 195]

TABLE V

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Tribal Choices (Social Distance) of Urban Kanuri Schoolboys (aged 13-19)

Ordinal	Choice Cardinal	Tribe	Mean Choice	Average Deviation	Remarks
I (1-3)	1	Arab	3.24	1.73	Rich traders, people of the Koran. Considered to be good-looking. Own-tribe.
	2	Kanuri	3.49	2.01	
II (4-6)	3	Europeans	3.89	2.17	The highest political authority
	4	Shuwa	4.21	1.95	Beautiful women, Arabic-speaking, Muslims, acculturate easily.
	5	Hausa	4.45	1.95	A Muslim Emirate, much historical contact
III (7-9)	6	Fulani	6.57	2.24	Muslims, nomads, sometimes good, sometimes bad relations.
	7	Yoruba	8.60	2.44	Part Muslim, not much contact with this group.
IV (10-12)	8	Babur	9.66	2.65	Part Muslim, some contact, increasing today.
	9	Bolewa	9.94	2.63	Part Muslim, some contacts
	10	Kanembu	10.03	2.96	Muslim, but raided the Kanuri in the past. Some acculturation.
	11	Mandara	10.85	2.58	Pagan, very little contact
	12	Tubo	11.70	3.00	Muslim, raided the Kanuri until quite recently
	13	Magari	11.90	2.46	Pagan, very little contact socially
	14	Ibo	12.30	2.88	Christian-Pagan, contact as a separate ethnic group in cities.
V (13-15)	15	Tuareg	13.75	2.07	Muslim, much feared for their raiding
	16	Tiv	14.08	2.16	Pagans, known to be naked, very little contact.
VI (16-18)	17	Banana	15.69	1.75	Both groups are pagan, many of whom live as a minority group
	18	Owosa	16.34	1.84	among the Kanuri as labourers and brewers of beer

• The Ordinal choices in Roman numerals I-VI are calculated from categories of mean choices; e.g. I-1 to 3, II - 4 to 6, III 7 to 9, etc.

563 829 who descended from the north on settled towns and caravans for plunder and slaves. Even today they are feared for their aggressive and warlike ways. The pagan groups who are most contacted, the Banana and the Gwoza peoples, many of whom live as a despised minority among the Kanuri, are rated the lowest among the non-Muslim groups. While those peoples who have many recent converts to Islam, like the Babur or the Yoruba, are rated much higher than the less contacted pagan peoples like the Mandara, Magari and Tiv, who are in their turn rated higher than the more closely contacted Gwoza and Banana.

Occupation

554 The occupational role which a person performs is a major determinant of status in the total society. Traditionally, as well as contemporaneously, any person holding a political position is accorded a high status in relation to all other occupations. The higher the political position in the governmental hierarchy, the higher the 554 567 status accorded the person doing the job. Thus the status of a slave, for example, is strongly dependent upon his occupation. In Magumeri a slave of the District Head, who gives the District Head free labour and has no political ties or power, has a very low status. On the other hand, the District Head considers himself the slave of the son of a former Shehu, because his father was a slave of the former Shehu. The District Head's status in the society as a whole is high because of his occupation as a District Head, notwithstanding his slave background.

555 793 Koranic mallams are accorded prestige because of their close connection to the supernatural which gives them specialized powers, and because of the leading role they take in rites de passage. The variation in their status is due to their success (see below pp. 225-228, arziyi) and their birth.

793 228, arsiyi) and their birth. There are mallams who form part of the
[565] highest ranking status group in the state as well as peasant and beg-
gar mallams. Each political leader of any size has his own mallams
[693] attached to his organization, as do many powerful men. Since Koranic
knowledge is also legal knowledge the judiciary is a specialized,
high status sub-group of mallams.

556 Beneath the political and religious occupations lie the
[565] broad base of peasant or commoner roles, which are differentiated
[441] primarily on the basis of material success. Among these occupations
it was observed that the role of wealthy trader obtained the highest
status. This is due to its being the most lucrative in comparison to
554 all other non-political occupations. Traditionally, the occupation of
• 829 butcher, blacksmith, tanner, petty broker, and barber are accorded
shame (nungu) status in relation to other positions, while drummer-
entertainers are also considered low status people who have no proper
sense of dignity.

Informants defined shame status of occupations by whether or not it would be shameful for a "decent" free person whose father was a mallam or a political leader to take up the job, aside from reasons of economic necessity (kwansako) which (allegedly) excuses the role occupant from shame. The reasons given for shame (nungu) occupations are as follows:(1)

[826] (a) butcher - he cuts animals, mallams who do this are bad mallams; he takes life for money; he smells of blood (the Kanuri equate blood closely with life, soul and personal power).

(b) blacksmith - they made arms for the enemies of the Prophet.

(c) tanner - they smell badly; their work smells unpleasantly; only a man with no proper shame could do such work.

(1) Composite statement from informants.

554 (d) barber - they are ignorant; they know bad things (fear of witch-
829 craft) and magical malevolence which is also attributed
[789] to hunters, medicine sellers, magicians and Koranic mal-lams.

554 (e) petty brokers - they take property to sell in the market that is
829 not their own, and then they give the money to
441 the property owner, but they never give the true amount, they always keep their own share, they can never be trusted. Good people could never do such work. A broker is not vertically related to others, he is an individual agent — it is often difficult to find out exactly where he lives. His non-attachment makes him less likely to be a person whom people can trust. There is also much reasonable experience behind his cheating, which many know of to their loss.

554 Kanuri notions of status are such that any person who takes
[558] up any of these occupations due to economic necessity is not supposed to be accorded as low a status as if he were born into the occupation. This idea gives support to the value placed upon upward mobility in
[775] Kanuri culture. One mallam told the writer that he had read in the Koran that people, who were of these low status occupations would never reach paradise, even if they were good and proper in their behaviour all their lives.

426 The lowest occupation status is that of money-lender, for
554 it is widely known that this practice is contrary to the edicts of the
577 Muslim religion. In real life this approbrium varies a great deal primarily because of the covert admiration given to money-lenders for their material success which allows them the cash surplus to loan for interest.

178 The colonial period has seen the growth of many new kinds
463 of occupations that require western education. At first, outsiders,
[167] often from the southern parts of Nigeria, were brought in to man the few essential jobs in the mechanical workshops, the hospitals, and the offices. Today, they are rapidly being replaced by northerners and in Bornu, itself, by Kanuri.

556 so openly about his own financial matters and property to the incessant
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(123) questions which were thrown at him. They insisted that this would only lead to a multiplication of requests for gifts of money, clothes, food,
(251) and loans. Again, this is one of the reasons the Kanuri give for having both above and below ground storage pits for food crops. A household head is very reluctant to ever discuss exactly how many storage pits he has in his compound or how much of last year's crops remains uneaten. If this information can be obtained at all, much assurance has to be given that it is to be kept entirely confidential.

But the conflict over the proper consumption of wealth by self or others for status validation is not completely solved by covert
(152) savings. Since the values of the society are, to some extent, always the values of a majority of its individual members, this confict takes place both in the individual's social and his psychological life, and is in this writer's opinion, one of the main sources of anxiety among the individual members of Kanuri society.

Rural/Urban

369 Although rural or urban status can be changed by residence,
• 829 there is a differentiation, more sharply made by upper class city dwellers, between "bush" (rural) people and urban dwellers. City people feel themselves to be more "advanced" and sophisticated, better informed, and more socially mobile than the rural population whom the city dwellers consider to be ignorant, dirty and untrustworthy. The rural people make much less distinction between urban and rural residence, although they all know that there are many "wonderful" things in the city, such as the cinema, or the Maiduguri market where goods from all over the world are on sale daily. Another difference noticeable immediately to the

369 342 829 Another difference noticeable immediately to the stranger is the house type. In the cities, people for the most part live in mud dwellings, often with corrugated iron roofing, while in the "bush" the peasant contents himself with a grass-roofed hut. In 1957-58 several of the rich leaders in Borno were building, under private contract, city houses for themselves of burnt brick, with steel windows, electricity, and cement floors. 216.

369 829 In Maguneri, complaints against rural people are always heard from the N.A. officials stationed there, whose homes are in Maiduguri, the capital. The constantly speak of the permanent residents of the bush as dirty and immoral, and claim that they would never marry a "bush" girl. [585] When the District Head did marry a girl from a neighbouring rural town, the wedding foods cooked by her female relatives and distributed to the dignitaries of Maguneri were of such a low quality that it became a standing joke to tell of the rural kind of marriage that the District Head had made. On the other hand, the rural people do not feel as great a difference between themselves and others of their own social level in the city. They know the city to be more heterogeneous ethnically than the rural areas, but this does not affect their lives a great deal, either in the bush or when in the city on visits. The rural person does, however, distinguish between himself and those like him, and the civil servant from the city who is in the bush to administer it. These administrative personnel are feared, respected, and considered to occupy a different world whose income is higher, and whose power is dangerous. The rural peasant consequently avoids the civil servantin the bush, unless his confidence is won over through continued and harmless association.

Class as Status and Socio-Cultural Segmentation

12 In a complex stratified society having many dimensions of status and involving social mobility up or down these dimensions, the

121 notion of class becomes a somewhat knotty one for the researcher. This is because it lacks the precision of his analytically derived status dimensions and yet it demands discussion, for the very good empirical reason that the people themselves recognize class distinctions. The theoretical answer lies in the nature of the concept of class as distinct from status. Class is a more inclusive category which cuts up an entire society into only a few segments. In so doing it incorporates many of the status dimensions by correlating them into ranges so that all the high statuses of dimensions a, b, c, d, . . . n, are unified into a large segment of the population, while the same thing may occur at other ranges along the status dimensions, giving the society one, two or more classes. When these segments are present, the outward signs such as differentiation in language, dress, manners and other social and cultural characteristics of class membership, become another status dimension to that recognizable membership in any class confers varying status upon the individual. Because of the noticeable sub-cultural differences between class segments, recognizability and imitation often blur the distinction and widen the scope for social mobility. Nevertheless, in order to actually obtain continuous high status in the society, the person must be seen and judged as having high rankings along the dimensions already discussed above. In the following discussion, this theoretical framework can be seen as the process underlying Kanuri class distinctions.

556 In the every day life of Bornu, the life spans of different
565 individuals in the population are lived out within differing ranges of
829 experience (which may change through time). This rather abstract statement can easily be explained by an illustration drawn from the judgements made by a young peasant in Magumeri on the subject of wealth. He reported that there were very few wealthy people in Magumeri village itself,

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[434] but that in Gwonyiri, about three-quarters of a mile to the east of Magumeri village, there were at least a dozen "rich" men. When asked why they were rich he answered that they had very large farms (about fifteen to twenty acres) and made much money from their cash crops. [442] One was a wholesale kola nut dealer and sold many (four to six) "packages" [465] of nuts (one package equals five to eight thousand nuts) per month. It was illuminating in this conversation, in which the young man was asked, "What is a rich man?" and, "Who are rich men?", that he had not mentioned the District Head of Magumeri who earns officially seven hundred pounds per annum, or any of the well-known rich traders of Bornu who live in Maiduguri. When asked whether the rich peasants of Gwonyiri were wealthier than the District Head or a rich trader in the city he said "atè a'l gèdigèdi" (that is something different) because "gandi kam gèdi" (they are different people). The District Head is an aristocrat, a man of power, and the rich trader is a kam birni (a city man) but "arma andi tala" (we are peasants). That is to say, the informant's birth and socialization into the rural peasant sector of Kanuri society made his range of judgments along the dimensions of status different from that of a chief or a rich trader. Like other informants, his concept of the status dimension was divided into "my" range, or "our" range, and "their" range. Although he knew that the range of statuses along any dimension went beyond "our range", he perceived people outside this to be "different" and he used the expression "different people" to describe them. Yet he certainly recognized that they were of the same ethnic group as himself. When he was first asked about rich people he used

556 565 829 the range of statuses he associated most closely with his own life.(1) The differing life experiences of large segments of the population bring about common ranges of experience for the whole segment. Thus rural peasants form one large massive segment which can be called a class.

565 369 [166] A large number of people in the city feel themselves to be a part of this lower class segment, the tala or peasants. Certainly the common poverty among them keeps them all within one category of economic activity (materially); however, other factors are involved. A large portion of the city population are extremely recent arrivals in the urban [103] centres. Bornu cities, of which Maiduguri (or Yerwa as it is called in Bornu) is the largest, have grown enormously in the past few decades. This means that most of the people in urban centres are of recent rural origin and thus still retain many of the sentiments of their background.(2) This is not meant to contradict the discussion above on the rural/urban. However, it should be remembered that the distinction is extremely various and very recent for many people. [241] Another unifying factor is the maintenance of rural farms by city people, who move out, or send out a son or a servant, to cultivate a farm in the bush during the growing season, thus retaining their contact with the rural areas. One of the other

(1) Differing ranges of experience and personal aspirations may cause an expansion of the scale which people refer to. Thus one very ambitious young trader, from a peasant background, who still lived in the bush but was contemplating a move to the city, told the writer immediately, when asked, that Alhassin Dan Tata of Kano (one of the richest men in Nigeria) was a rich man. Nevertheless, lower class bush people generally used a frame of reference more nearly similar to the young peasant above.

[162](2) Population figures for Maiduguri are as follows (see Coleman, J.S., op. cit. p. 74):

1921	1931	1953
16,274	24,359	54,646

Government service personnel in Bornu estimated the population of Maiduguri at 75,000 to 80,000 during the period 1956/57.

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828 makes what power he has work well for him, avoids illness, poverty and derision, or does anything that can be measured in terms of achievement, then the degree of his success is the proof as to how much arziyi (good fortune, personal degree of success) he has in his hal (his nature, his being, his essence). Like Calvinistic pre-determination, arziyi is hoped for before the fact, and indicated or substantiated after the fact, of success.

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565 In answering questions about arziyi, informants of all
828 classes and ranks are generally agreed that no matter how much success
829 a peasant has with his farm, his wife, at cards, or at his craft work, he can never possibly come close to having as much arziyi as even a bad District Head or Village Area Head. When finer discriminations are asked for, however, disagreements sometime arise. Thus informants when questioned as to who has more arziyi, a trader in the city who recently bought a big truck and has a large compound of wives and followers, or a somewhat effete District Head, they answered according to how they ranked wealth alone as compared to political power. Since both of these dimensions of status are usually congruent when ranked high, the discrimination is often a difficult one. Nevertheless there is, at any one level in the society, a large measure of agreement about the amount of arziyi of the various social roles in the society at any one time. People from different levels of the society give somewhat differing pictures of the distribution of arziyi throughout the society. This results from their different vantage points and therefore differing opportunities for perceiving the social structure. Thus although many lower class people find it difficult to decide whether or not the effete District Head has more arziyi than the rich city trader, those close to the chief, including himself, feel that the rich trader has more.

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829 This brings up an interesting observation. The judgment of any individual about the distribution of arziyi in society at any one time is his particular notion about the arrangement of social roles in the social structure. Furthermore, his estimation of the distribution of arziyi at any one level of the hierarchy, e.g. comparing the behaviour of one District Head with another, is his judgment of the success that occupants of similar roles were enjoying relative to one another.

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829 Arziyi seems to be used in two related ways in Kanuri culture. Firstly, in an enormously heterogeneous society, it gives a satisfactory answer to individual variations along one of the most affective dimensions of behaviour, success in achieving immediate and long range goals. Secondly, it is used as an explanation for the nature of the social structure, i.e. for its stratification. Those people, who have higher status along any dimension of stratification, have more arziyi, which accounts for their ability to maintain such a role in the social organization. These two ways of using arziyi as an explanation for differentiation are related so that what results is a Kanuri theory of society that at once validates its structure and explains the changes in personnel which accompany a system where personal fortunes may rise and fall rapidly. Thus a high status position in the structure indicates that the person has that amount of arziyi. His performance of the role required by this status may show him to have even more arziyi than he will outstrip others who occupy the same status and seek the same goals. On the other hand, he may do badly which will indicate a loss of arziyi and a loss of status. Arziyi is also, besides being a theory of society, a theory of causation, which integrates social and individual differentiation under one simple, mystical force, personal

(558)

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828 good fortune, which is continually being validated since its presence
829 is manifested after the fact of its operation in behaviour.

643 lower rank, that the Shehu had a good deal to say in the appointment of new DH's, and could operate as a bulwark to protect office holders whose connection to the palace and/or Bornu tradition made them feel some reliance on the monarch's protection.

643 648 [114] That this interpretation is open to the charge of ethnocentricism the writer is keenly aware, for it is the avowed British policy to create in Bornu a constitutional monarchy of the English variety, while making the Waziri and the rest of the Council the effective administration of the state. Thus the interpretation is in line with European policy. Perhaps the power situation only looks this way and is in [829] reality quite different. This much can be said: high placed Bornu officials agreed with this trend and for rational reasons. They argued that the state functions were becoming extremely complicated, and that only trained, worldly men, who understood not only Bornu, but Bornu in relation to Nigeria, could adequately do the job. The British, however, are inconsistent in their policy, for they feel very strongly about having somebody who can speak English as the next Shehu, while the Kanuri leaders want a particular well loved older man who is known for his view of the monarchy as a ceremonial rather than an authoritative role. If the present Shehu dies (he is 85) before the British leave, the Kanuri may find themselves with a younger, more ambitious Shehu, who will attempt to affect the running of the state.(1)

645 647 Bornu Emirate besides having traditional chiefs also has the formal structure of a western civil service. Under the Shehu's Councillors are the various N.A. departments. Under the chairmanship of the Waziri, each Councillor is responsible for one of the N.A. departments whose titles - forestry, sanitation, agriculture, education, public

(1) The British have the power of veto on appointments, so that although the Kanuri may put up names, the British can, by using this

[Footnote continues on p. 25B]

647 557 traditional one. One of the senior members of an individual's agnatic group arranges an audience with some person connected to an N.A. department. One informant in the N.A. commented on recruitment in the following manner.

> If you want a job in the Treasury, one of your relatives (a senior male agnate) will find out, if he does not already know, the name of some person who is known to "help" people and go to greet him some night. Your relative will give him some money and he will say that you must come back the next day and he will tell you. Then he will find you a job in the Department, probably by using some of the money your relative gave him, and then the job is yours, and you are in the N.A. . . . Sometimes it takes a long time.

647 Because of the constant shifts in personnel, some to higher positions, others because of dismissals or jail terms, there is much unpredictability of job tenure in the N.A. and suspicion of unorthodox 647 behaviour is a common rule. Thus one junior N.A. official remarked 576 that he must be careful in his department to always dress less well than his superiors, or it would be considered ro kura (ambitious, proud), and therefore threatening. On the other hand, he must not dress too poorly or his superiors will consider him a wastrel, who 647 spends his money on women, praise-singers, and drink. Again, it is extremely difficult to transfer (through own effort) from one branch of the service to another. To transfer, a formal application must be made to the person's own department heads and N.A. council; if a release is granted, then a further application to the desired department [829] can be submitted. To the Kanuri such a transfer is not considered a rejection of the work, but of the people in the department. Thus informants claimed that they would be considered ingrates and trouble- [662] makers if they were ever to attempt such a thing. Transfers, if they are to be accomplished at all, must be done through relatives and friends "visiting at night", i.e. paying tribute to the appropriate

3: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1960 MS14 Kanuri MS14

Chapter IX

The Economic Life

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For purposes of consumption and production the basic unit among the Kanuri is the household group consisting of a man, his wife
128 or wives, and their children. Since the external and internal social relations of household groups has formed a major part of the study up to this point these data are omitted from the present discussion. This allows us to deal with the "bare bones" of economic activity and to ask questions about the patterns of consumption, production and distribution of goods and services. Where economic activities are set into heretofore unmentioned forms of social organization such as occurs in the distributive sector, then these structures are described and related to the economic activity being analysed.

121 For purposes of the present analysis, consumption is operationally equated with all behaviour pertaining to those things acquired through the expenditure of capital resources as these are known to the Kanuri; production refers to those activities from which income is derived in cash and kind, excluding trade; and distribution includes those activities by which the movement of goods and services is accomplished from producers to consumers.

829 It should be noted here that this classification is an arbitrary one in terms of Bornu culture. To the Kanuri, consumption comes under the linguistic rubric of awo manyen (things we need), while production and distribution are lumped together as sanya (occupations). Where an individual has two occupations such as farmer and craftsman, or farmer and trader, he most often reports his non-farming activity as his sanya.

000 Besides the usual anthropological procedure of participant

476 Another source of labour is the serwa (co-operative work group). This is composed of a group of relatives, friends, and neighbours, not necessarily of the same age group. They help one another to farm, fix or build houses, repair compound walls and other jobs requiring collective effort. These serwa are easily joined and as easily left and may have a long or short life depending upon the interest of the members in obtaining such a labour source.

241 For the upper classes and urban farm owners, labourers (usually pagan)
464 are always available during the growing season. Many of these are local pagans living in Bornu, others are migrant labourers who have come to Bornu during the growing season to obtain their cash income for taxes.(1)

251 When the crop is harvested, food grains are taken from their stalks and stored in underground pits. Although the Kanuri utilize some aboveground storage shelters, underground storage is more widespread.

43 The cash crop (groundnuts) is sold to middlemen (sent to the bush during the harvest season to buy for traders in the city). Surplus producers of food crops store their harvest and visit markets for the rest of the year selling their produce. In Magumeri, two-thirds of the cultivators questioned in the survey were only semi-subsistence farmers. Part but not all of this is made up of income from the cash crop. Thus most people who farm have some other income-producing activity which makes up for the fact that they do not grow enough food or cash crop to maintain themselves for an entire year.

463 Craft production includes such occupations as butcher, black-
829 smith, potter, entertainer, leather worker, native doctor, hunter, dyer, lorry driver, mechanic, bricklayer. This is the Kanuri way of viewing

(1) See Kirke-Greene, A.H.M., Tax and Travel Among the Hill-Tribes of Northern Adamawa, Africa, Vol. 26, No. 4 (1956) pp. 355-369.

463 crafts, that is to lump services such as native doctor with manufac-
829 turing such as pottery making. Recruitment into a craft is carried on
874 by an apprenticeship system. In return for learning the craft, the apprentice serves his senior and gives him some or all of his earnings
874 during the training period. New occupations such as carpenter or lorry
178 driver, which do not require literacy, have utilized the apprentice system of recruitment. On the other hand, in western jobs requiring literacy and other kinds of schooling the apprentice system is at a minimum.

467 Traditional craft workers in Bornu are organized by occupation under head men in each village area and each city. Today the Maiduguri head of a craft has the highest status of local craft heads in Bornu, but his few privileges hardly extend beyond the capital. Nevertheless, rural heads of crafts who visit Maiduguri should still render nona (pay their respects) to the Maiduguri head of their sanya (occupation). Informants everywhere agreed that not only local craft heads but all craft members should do the same, although this latter prescription seems to be more honoured in the breach. Local heads all over Bornu do, however, have some special privileges. Thus in the larger centres of Maiduguri, Geidam, Nguru, and Gashua, the head butcher has one day a week (not the traditional market day) on which his meat alone is sold. In Magumeri, the head butcher gets a small commission on all skins sold by Magumeri butchers to the hides and skins buyers.

433 The household group in Bornu cannot produce all the things
438 it requires in its consumption patterns. The needs of a specialized and semi-specialized population are satisfied through the operation of a highly organized system of interlocking market cycles. This system is described in detail in the section on trade.

425 Permission should be sought for a new farm in either area. However, land obtained from the Lawan
632 in the "house" farm section is already cleared and bounded into plots;
423 this type of acquisition is thought and spoken of as a bequest. On the other hand, permission to use bush land is not so much a grant from the Lawan as a formal recognition of his political leadership in the community. Furthermore, bushland must be cleared and the act of clearing is a traditionally accepted criterion for the establishment of property rights.

423 The "house" farms are not be confused with the small garden
241 plots kept usually by women inside the compound walls.(1) These latter plots are planted with early maturing maize, millet and vegetables, which are used for easing the hard times before the harvest and as a
423 private source of income by women. To the Kanuri, the word fato used
• [829] to describe a piece of land adjacent to the town or village reflects their conception of the settlement as a set of extended patrilocal households. The lands immediately adjacent to a stable settlement are owned by the long term resident households and passed on to descendants. These people also own bush farms but can be distinguished from more recent arrivals to the town by their ownership of plots in the house farm are.

423 The difference between bush and "house" farms can thus be
829 seen in Kanuri eyes as a difference in social identification. A "house" farm represents older, more integrated membership in the community, while a bush farm indicates newness or transience. The former means a working relationship, not only a formal one, between the owner and the

[192] (1) There is no difficulty here if the term is translated literally; fatobe - of the compound, i.e. the genitive case, meaning the farm of the compound. In-the-compound would require the use of the Kanuri word suro - in or inside of.

423 [829] political leader, and/or it means that the person has inherited land through his agnatic relationship to a previous community member.

A second characteristic of Kanuri land tenure is its progressively private character through time, especially after an inheritance. Thus if A receives a plot in the house farm area from his Lawan and three seasons later leaves the town the land returns to the dispensing power of the political leader. However, if A receives land from his father and wishes to leave the area, he may give the land to a friend, or attempt to sell it, especially if he considers it a "good" farm plot. That is to say, after land use rights have passed on through inheritance, the dispensation of these rights comes (more properly) under the power of the inheritors using the land. However, things are not quite so clearcut in practice as this description implies. Thus much depends on the particular political leader and the peasant in question. The writer has seen land rented by A to B when it had only been given to A by the Lawan a few years before, and there are numerous stories of Lawans attempting to repossess land use rights or their dispensation after several generations. Thus the second characteristic is more properly speaking a tendency among other. Kanuri land tenure as observed today is really the result of three forces which operate in greater or lesser intensity through time. These are (a) the rights of land dispensation of the political leader, especially to land adjacent to the settlement; (b) the rights of agnatic kin members over inherited land; and (c) the right accruing to anyone through clearing new land and using it. The stability of this ownership system depends primarily upon the political relations between households and their local political leaders. Given a working political unit in which rights, duties and obligations of superiors and subordinates in the community

443 pushed down by a nonchalant buyer with an anxious seller whose sales
435 for that day have been low.

This above description has exaggerated the price fluctuations to some extent. With many items, prices hold as constants for long periods and become an institutionalized part of the market. Thus a box of sugar cubes is one shilling and only very rarely did this price ever
443 vary in the entire period of the field work. Even with prices that did
435 vary, it is the writer's opinion that European travellers and commenta-
437 tors on Africa have overstressed the haggling up and down variability of prices in African markets because of their own experiences. Certainly, market sellers like to haggle over price and do so with all the enjoy-
[609] ment of the hardened poker player bluffing at cards. However, only to
[829] the European, who is conceived of as infinitely wealthy, do prices range so widely. When the writer attended his first markets, sellers haggled wildly and prices ranged enormously to him and to his wife. However, with time, the "real" prices were learned and the range within which
[609] haggling could take place narrowed significantly. If the writer then attended a new market where he was unknown, except as a European, then the range widened again and sometimes the seller would refuse to come anywhere near the "real" price claiming in Kanuri to his associates and the world in general that a European should pay more than an African. Friends always instructed the writer on the "real" price, telling him not to allow a price to be raised simply because he was a European. This "real" price is something which can be easily overlooked in an open market where haggling is the format of the buyer-seller relationship. Bartering may range widely or narrowly, but the experienced buyer and seller both know quite well, within a very small margin, where the final price will be set. This is why the really tenacious bartering comes at

000 at any particular point in time.

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183 People are also ranked in terms of their wealth and the manner in which they use their material resources. There is a conflict between consumption of wealth for subsistence purposes and for the creation and maintenance of social relationships. This is only partially resolved by covert savings because the competition between subsistence needs and the high value placed upon generosity are irreconcilable in practice, given the low standard of living in the area.

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554 In the society as a whole, people are differentiated as to whether or not they are rural or urban. This distinction is more sharply made by upper class city dwellers, since lower class urban dwellers have many ties which connect them to the rural areas as well as to the newly expanded cities.

565 Lower and higher statuses are generally co-ordinated into two broad segments or classes of the society. These large segments are characterized by many cultural features of dress, language, etiquette, house-type and so on. These features create the possibility of simulation of upper class membership by upwardly aspiring lower class individuals. Individuals can imitate these cultural concomitants to give the impression of more or less membership in a class. And this 'more or less' quality turns the segmentary aspect of class into a status dimension along which people can be ranked.

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829 Permeating all of the social stratification and perhaps helping to fuse the various segments is a cultural ideology concerning the nature of success. Kanuri culture contains a theory of society and its causes, all of which is embodied in the concept arziyi. The theory explains to the people, both the structure of society and mobility

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within this structure. The higher the status of an individual, the more arziyi he has, and the success of any one individual either in moving from one role to another, or in performing any given role also indicates the extent of his arziyi.

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The Kanuri political system has been described in terms of the organization of power and authority in increasingly scaled social structures starting with the extended household organization and

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ending with a discussion of modern political parties. Any local residence group in Bornu is potentially a larger political unit either in the form of a ward within a town or as a separate hamlet in the bush. This unit resembles an extended family organization but may include non-kin as well as kin members who are all subordinate in some way to the senior male of the residence association. We have used the term

[602]

extended household organization to describe this flexible unit. The relation of all subordinates to the senior member is similar to that between a father and his sons and non-kin as well as kin members

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bring their wives to this unit at the local level. If the extended

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household organization head can maintain the subordination of his fol-

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lowers, then he is on the way to becoming a "big" man. This can eventually lead to his attainment of the political position of Hamlet Head or Ward Head (Belama). This achieved status is then stabilized through inheritance.

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At the local level, the extended household organization applies to a territorial unit of closely contiguous compounds each with its own head but with some form of subordination to the head of the larger unit. As we have seen, in other sections of the political organization and in the economic organization this kind of superior/subordinate relationship may be spread out to include men not living

4: Cohen E-5 (1956-1957) 1961
MS14 Kanuri MS14

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And so, after ten months of work the project was back where it had started. It may be that in future years the people will come to accept super-phosphate fertilizer; now, however, there is as much resistance to it as there was at the beginning of the demonstration.

Analysis

The demonstration of super-phosphate fertilizer in the Magumeri area was in most essentials a technical success. The programme was introducted by a Kanuri field worker employed by the Agriculture department which was under the direction of a senior Agricultural Officer who was himself a Kanuri. What went wrong? Why did the people so unanimously reject the innovation?

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In discussing factors affecting economic growth, Linton (1952: 76) has commented that people will improve their lot unless they have had adverse experiences in the past with a particular innovation. This point is particularly relevent to the situation under discussion.

Some of the people in Magumeri had used the fertilizer in previous years without adequate instruction. By placing the pellets in the ground with the seed, they had damaged the plants in some cases, and killed them in others. When the Agricultural Officer made his speech in June, 1956, people remarked afterwards that the *bundar nasarabe* (European compost) was useless. It was agreed that European technology was very wonderful, but the Europeans did not grow millet and groundnuts, and therefore knew nothing of the techniques necessary for such cultivation. Therefore the speech was in effect a failure. A field worker who had rapport with the cultivators could easily have discovered this important fact and the department would then have been aware that they were not planning an innovation at all but rather that they had a battle on their hands against a confirmed negative opinion. That references were made to the previous misuse of the fertilizer indicates that there was some appreciation of this fact. However simple contradiction was not sufficient to change these attitudes.

4: Cohen E-5 (1956-1957) 1961
MS14 Kanuri MS14

Linton (1952: 77) has also suggested that peasants view any attempts to change their economic condition with suspicion when these originate from their rulers. The peasant, often quite justifiably, feels that anything his rulers offer as a chance to improve conditions is probably much more to the ruler's advantage than to his own.

This was very certainly the case in Magumeri, and had occurred several times before. Thus, only a few weeks before the fertilizer demonstration began, the Village Head of Magumeri had tried to convince people of the worthiness of literacy. His argument centered around the idea that when literate the peasants would be able to catch their rulers, including himself, for issuing false tax receipts (Cohen and Frank, 1960). When the people refused to volunteer he forced a number of individuals to sign up for the literacy courses. It is difficult to say exactly how many were forced to "volunteer" for the fertilizer demonstration, but that coercion was involved is undoubtedly true.

On the other hand, a strange and almost unprecedented thing occurred at the final meeting when the people were asked whether or not they would use the fertilizer in the coming year. District Council meetings were usually very stiff affairs in which a formal agenda was followed under the guidance of a British District Officer. Very often a District Head rehearsed these "democratic" meetings first to make sure motions would be seconded, voted on properly, etc. On this occasion, an African District Officer was present, and the District Head gave the members of the Council a definite choice as to whether they would accept the fertilizer or not. Bornu is an autocratic country and subordinates are usually ordered about, unless the matter is a trivial one. The outward signs of democratic procedures introduced by colonial rule are very superficially imposed upon feudal autocracy, so that effective social action is carried out dictatorially. This is an ancient society and people are traditionally accustomed to these procedures. That dictatorial powers were not invoked over the decision to use, or not use, fertilizer in years to come, immediately defined it as a trivial and unimportant matter upon which people could make up their own minds.

4: Cohen E-5 (1956-1957) 1961
MS14 Kanuri MS14

This triviality[1] is supported by traditional notions of cultural and social change. It has often been said that Muslims are tied to their traditional ways because of the fatalism inherent in their religious beliefs. Unfortunately this is an overgeneralization that explains very little, and certainly not the course of events described above. The Kanuri *are* Muslim, and they often *do* make fatalistic statements. But, their fatalism always concerns areas of total impotence as these are conceived of by the speaker. Thus rural peasants speak in a fatalistic way about the political organization of Bornu, although this is not the case with many urban persons who belong to, or support, reform parties. Or again, fatalism may be expressed over death, or knowledge of God, or the origin of the world, or its future. Fatalism is never referred to, however, for areas of behaviour that the individual construes to be susceptible to change by human efforts. This is especially true of two closely related areas of social life, (a) the economic sphere, and (b) social relations. The Kanuri believe that it is possible and desirable to increase economic status by one's own efforts. The preferred route to economic betterment is not via technology, although this is important, but by improving social relations. Thus to become a truck driver, one needs workable relations with people who are drivers, so that the status of apprentice may by achieved. That lorries are a technological improvement over horses and donkeys is easily perceived and accepted. That is to say, the Kanuri are not against change because as Muslims they accept the traditional world as a manifestation of God's will. They do believe, however, that individual advancement is gained primarily through profitable social relations, and only secondarily through technology.

It should also be noted in this respect that the Magumeri peasants never at any time voice any dissatisfaction with the quantity of their crop yields *using customary techniques*. Complaints are heard but these always have to do with other aspects of farm production more closely related to family and household organization. Traditionally, and this is so today, crop yields are increased through expanding one's acreage under cultivation. For all peasants questioned this is accomplished through the expansion of their household size, either by taking more wives, or client

[1] [i.e., that dictatorial powers were not invoked over the decision to use or not to use fertilizer, thus defining the whole matter as trivial and unimportant in the minds of the people. -- Analyst]

4: Cohen E-5 (1956-1957) 1961
MS14 Kanuri MS14

followers, or having children. Conversely, peasants who experience a decrease in crop yields attribute this to a loss of personnel in their household (Cohen, 1959: 272-5). Thus increased yields like many other facets of self-improvement in Bornu are based on social relations, not technology, when seen from the peasants' point of view.

Although there is no confirming evidence, another factor may have been operating in this situation. The sudden release from autocratic leadership could have been an expression of the aggression, hostility, and rebelliousness, usually associated with psychological reactions to authoritarian leadership. White and Lippitt (1953: 602) have shown this to be so in their studies of children's clubs, and it may have a much wider application. Whether or not people with a long tradition of autocratic social organization experience these same feelings, with the same intensity is a question which must await further research.

The field worker, Malam Abdulla, was a young man of twenty-two. He had recently graduated from a one-year course at an agricultural technical training college and hoped to rise quickly in the Bornu department. He was, however, blocked by the seniority system which placed over him people with less education than himself. The college officials had evidently made much of the advantages of education and promised the graduates rapid advancement. But, jealousy, nepotism, and his youth held him back, for the moment, from obtaining a higher post. Malam Abdulla deeply resented this, and continually blamed his lot upon the traditional social order of Bornu. He admired European technology, which had given him his hoped-for status, and was also attracted to the western ideology of liberal democracy, with which he had come into contact in secondary school.

His department head, the Agricultural Officer, also admired European technology and culture. He lived in a European house, ate western food, and could on occasion act as a completely acculturated person. That is to say, both the department head, and the field worker indicated a generalized cathexis for western culture, not just its technology.

4: Cohen E-5 (1956-1957) 1961
MS14 Kanuri MS14

242 177 This was reflected strongly throughout the fertilizer demonstration. The super-phosphate was first praised as a part of western technology which was dubbed "wonderful". It was made clear that this technique could increase productivity, but the idea was gained that it was because of European technological superiority that the fertilizer should be considered worthwhile. Perhaps the most rigid extension of western culture as well as technology, was in the use of one-acre plots as demonstration units. Since the goal of demonstration was to indicate the increase in productivity occasioned by the fertilizer, it was necessary only to obtain a plot and divide it in two. By always insisting on an acre, the field worker often left part of a farm plot out of the experiment arbitrarily, and by implication emphasized the "foreign" character of the innovation.

[829] The reaction to all this was simply to intensify the belief that Europeans knew nothing about Kanuri farming techniques.

242 177 561 [576] Another difficulty could have been the field worker's age. However, he was well aware that in Kanuri society young men do not tell older men how to behave, and was at all times polite, and respectful to older peasants. On the other hand, Malam Abdulla was a member of the political organization by training, [554] and by birth (his father was a Village Head). This gave him high status so that he could make suggestions to older people. 242 177 [829] Negative attitudes not to his age, but to his programme were reflected in peasants' statements to the writer that Malam Abdulla came from Yajuwa, to the south of Magumeri where the soil was a different colour, and therefore more amenable to the "European compost".

Finally, there was no "follow up" on the successful demonstration. The field assistant made little or no attempt to assess whether or not the peasants were convinced of the utility of the fertilizer. He conceived of his job as one in which his main task was to carry out a successful field demonstration, keep records, and turn in a final report. During the meeting, well after the harvest season when negative opinions and stereotypes had had several months to congeal, only the leaders of the community spoke of the project. No participating farmer was brought forward to speak of the success which he had observed on his

4: Cohen E-5 (1956-1957) 1961
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(829)

own farm plot. This added to the general impression of the fertilizer as an intrusive item, and one which had no practical value under local conditions.

Conclusion

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The human side of innovation has often been emphasized as being just as important as the technological. The Magumeri experience reiterates the fact that the social and psychological context of innovation requires careful analysis so that variables affecting innovation may be isolated and prepared for before any development programmes are put into action. If the place of social relations, as compared to technology, in farm production had been taken into account, the results of this experiment might well have been less disappointing. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that all technology is imbedded in a welter of cultural accretions. It is the responsibility of the innovator to isolate cultural characteristics of technology which are necessary to its successfull operation, from those which are simply there because of the cultural origins of the item. This is what lies at the root of flexibility as opposed to rigidity in the introduction of western technology to the underdeveloped areas of the world.

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